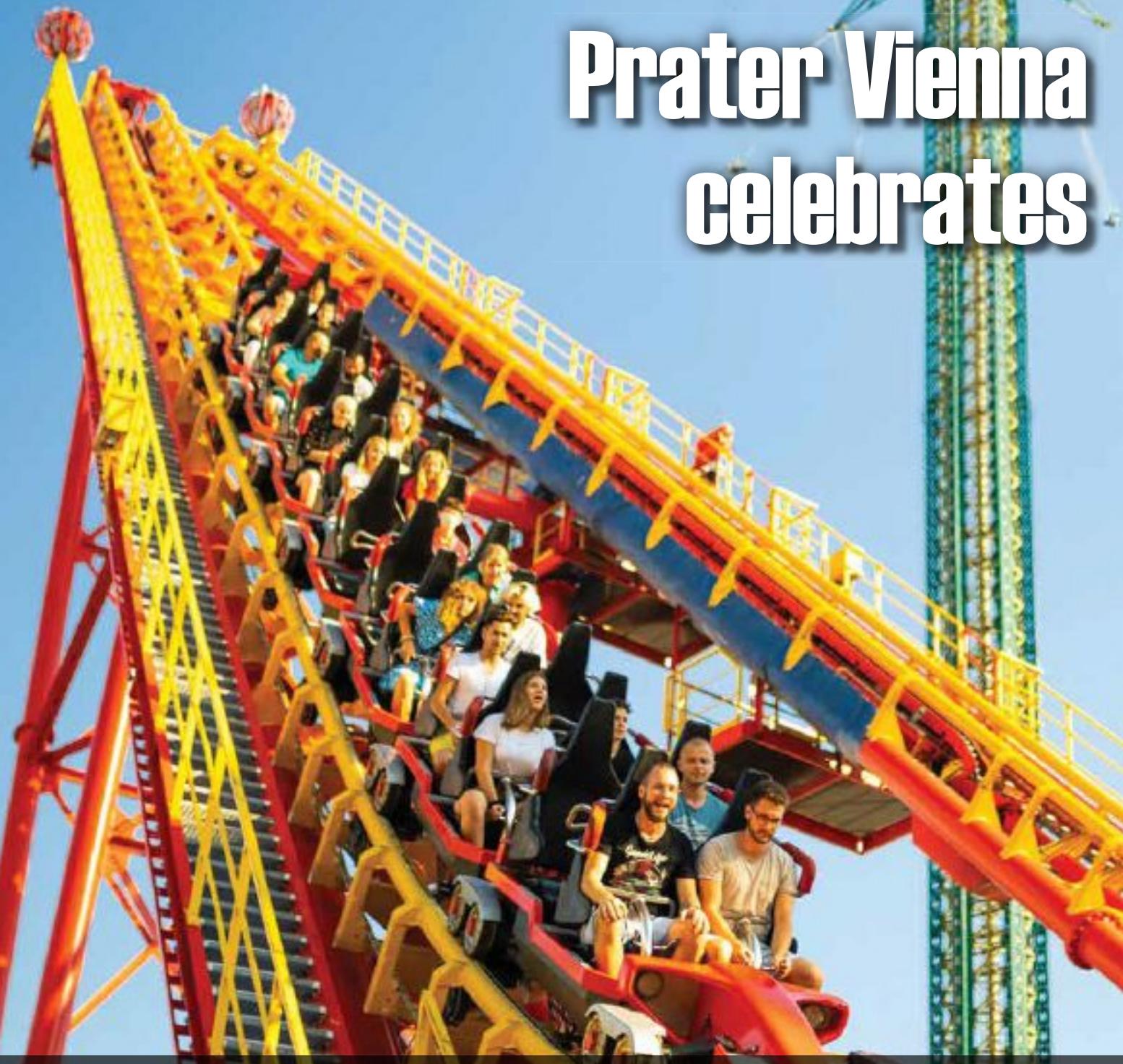


InterPark



InterPark.co.uk

Prater Vienna celebrates



Open to Question

Mohamed Abdalla Al Zaabi, Miral

Feature

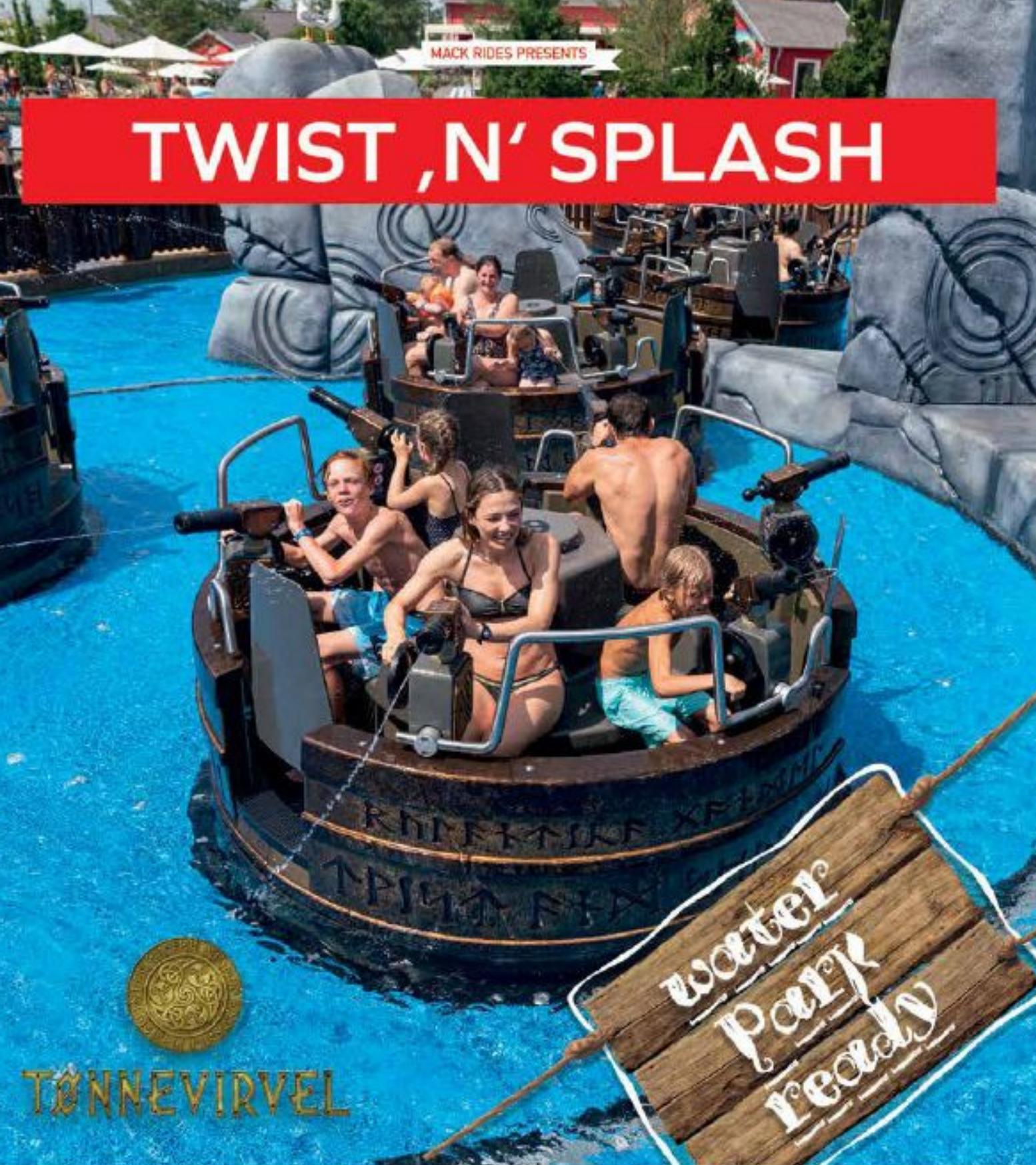
A look back at 2023 park investments

Project Profile

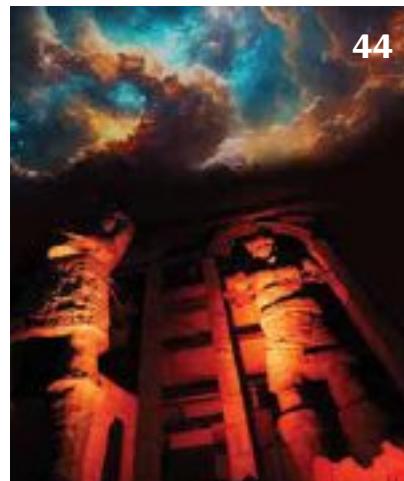
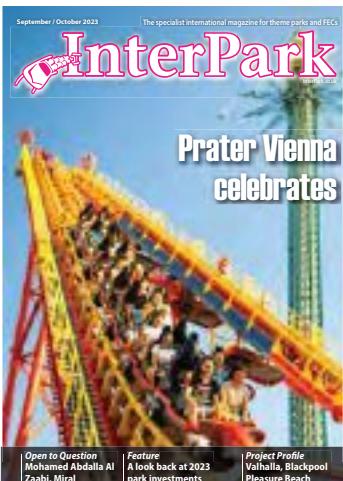
Valhalla, Blackpool Pleasure Beach

MACK RIDES PRESENTS

TWIST ,N' SPLASH



Interactive water action now is available for water parks - the Twist 'n' Splash features a water battle that is perfect for all ages. The free floating barrels pass by the many water cannons surrounding the ride and everyone is becoming part of the action. Learn more about Tønnevirvel and other attractions of Mack Rides at www.mack-rides.com



44

Welcome to the Sep/Oct issue of InterPark!

The September / October issue is upon us and I can't quite believe where the time has gone! With the summer season now drawing to a close, for this issue of the magazine, we take a look at what parks and operators have been investing in so far for 2023. The post COVID industry has bounced back brighter than ever, and with that comes brand-new rides, innovative technologies, milestone anniversaries and more from some of the biggest players in the game. Looking back over the year so far, what has stood out is the desire and need for immersive theme parks and attractions. Getting back to a sense of 'normality' has, at times, felt completely impossible, but the welcoming parks filled with their illuminated neon rides and comforting scent of fried donuts has been craved by those looking for a sense of nostalgia, as well as those wanting to create lasting family moments. Read more from page 28 onwards.

Elsewhere in the magazine, we bring you an InterPark first! We're taking a closer look at the museum sector and how it is embracing technology we're so used to seeing in the entertainment and attractions sector... With some heavyweight investments in AR and VR, could the museum sector be one to watch? Not only in terms of where the general public's spend is heading, but where potential new business opportunities could well lie... Read Emma Davidson's report on page 34.

The rest of the magazine is filled with our regular features - looking at the reinvention of Valhalla at Blackpool Pleasure Beach in Project Profile; getting behind the scenes of Prater Vienna park in Austria in Park Life; and I caught up with Mohamed Abdalla Al Zaabi, the man behind one of the Middle East's most prolific operators - Miral Group, for this month's Open to Question, you can read my interview on page 48.

And, if you're heading to IAAPA Europe be sure to send me your post-show press releases for the chance to be included in our coverage of the show.

Beth Whitaker Editor

Sep & Oct 2023

- 5 EUROPE NEWS**
- 6 AMERICA NEWS**
- 10 ASIA NEWS**
- 14 CHINA NEWS**
- 18 MIDDLE EAST NEWS**
- 20 WATERPARKS NEWS**
- 24 SHOW NEWS**
the latest from IAAPA Europe exhibitors
- 28 FEATURE 2023**
Park Investments
- 34 FEATURE**
Stepping Beyond Artefacts - museum technology
- 38 PARK LIFE**
Prater Vienna, Austria
- 42 COMMENT**
ADIPS - Shaping Safe Workplaces for All
- 43 PROJECT PROFILE**
Valhalla, Blackpool Pleasure Beach
- 48 OPEN TO QUESTION**
Mohamed Abdalla Al Zaabi
Miral Group
- 52 COMMENT**
Dennis Speigel - What Does the Future Hold for Season Passes?
- 54 EVENTS DIARY**





OUTSTANDING
SUPPLIERS
AWARDS

OUTSTANDING
PARKS
AWARDS

OUTSTANDING
INFLUENCERS
AWARDS

**ENTER NOMINATIONS
BY SEPT 23**



Contact us: Lily Zhang · Sales Director
+44 161 6100022 lily@leisureandattractions.com

Europe News

The latest news and announcements

1 LEGOLAND WINDSOR RESORT HITS HOLE IN ONE

Legoland Windsor Resort in the UK is in full swing preparing for its latest attraction - the world's first Lego themed indoor golf experience.

The golf course opens on 7 October and consists of four Lego themed areas within the nine-hole golf course, uniquely designed for those aged three-years-old and over. Each



course is designed to take a group of six people around one hour to play.

"Whether you are swinging into space, driving into Lego City, taking your best shot in a Mediaeval village, or even putting with Pirates, each theme is a 'hole' other level of fun!" is how Legoland shared the news.

Guests visiting Legoland Adventure Golf will be welcomed by a new Lego Minifigure, and Adventure Golf mascot, Birdie. After competing against family members to see who the champion golfer of the day is, guests are invited to enjoy a range of light snacks in the new café, the aptly named Tee Time.

Helen Bull, Divisional Director at Legoland Windsor Resort, said: "Move over Rory McIlroy, because this autumn we are incredibly excited to tee-off the first ever Lego themed indoor golf experience at our iconic Windsor Resort.

"This world-first attraction is part of the Resort's ongoing

investment into creating new and exciting experiences for all the family. Legoland Adventure Golf will give guests of all ages and abilities the chance to have play, have fun and build more memories together when it opens."

Legoland Windsor Resort features a further 55 interactive rides, attractions, live shows, building workshops and driving schools – all encrusted with 80 million Lego bricks and set in 150 acres of beautiful parkland.

An advertisement for Mack Rides. It features a large image of a roller coaster track with several cars filled with passengers. Below the image, the text "WE MAKE PEOPLE SMILE" is written in large, bold, white letters. Underneath that, in smaller white text, are the words "ROLLERCOASTER // WATER RIDES // SPIN RIDES // DARK RIDES". To the right of the image, the "MACK RIDES" logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized "M" icon followed by the words "MACK RIDES" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

Europe News

The latest news and announcements

2 EUROPA-PARK UNVEILS VOLTRON NEVERA POWERED BY RIMAC



Europa-Park will become ‘electro-charged’ in the near future as its eagerly anticipated roller coaster has been officially named.

Voltron Nevera powered by Rimac, created by Mack Rides, will become the 14th roller coaster present at Europa-Park. Set to open in 2024 it will be located in the new Croatian themed area of the theme park. Thus, the ceremonial event to announce the cutting-edge coaster fittingly took place in Croatia on the island of Hvar. To mark the unveiling, Croatian Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic was present along with dignitaries of Europa-Park.

The name of the ride partly derives from a partnership between Europa-Park and Bugatti Rimac, developed by the Croatian company Rimac Automobili with the Rimac Nevera the fastest electric car in the world. Meanwhile, the Nevera connotation comes from a Croatian term for a brisk storm. It is an alliance with ‘entrepreneurial spirit,’ according to Europa-Park Director Michael Mack: “The cooperation is the perfect match. There could not be a better one than Mate Rimac with his team, because the company is 100 percent authentic. The cooperation brings together a young generation that thinks outside the box. We are united by our entrepreneurial spirit, our passion for acceleration and our special relationship with Croatia. My wife Miriam comes from this country and as such plays an important inspiring role in the design of the new themed area. That our new partner is now also from Croatia makes me very proud.”

Mate Rimac, CEO of the Rimac Group, also shared his thoughts at the unveiling: “The history of the Mack family is very fascinating to me. What has been built up here over generations is incredible. The combination of Europa-Park and Bugatti Rimac is a great fit: We do crazy things in the automotive industry and Europa-Park does crazy things in the area of attractions. This is where visionaries and top engineers meet, both striving to be the best in their field. For me, it is an honour that Germany’s largest theme park presents not only our innovations, but also the rich history and culture of Croatia. In less than 15 years, we have managed to build an automotive company from the ground up with more than 2,100 employees and to implement incredible projects that are changing the automotive industry, including the fastest electric car in the world - the Nevera. I want to show the younger generation what is possible when you put your heart and mind to it.”

The name of the ride fully represents the roller coaster as riders will be propelled at 90km/h (56mph) up to four times - three times forwards and one backwards launch. In total, Voltron Nevera powered by Rimac will be a Stryker coaster, the first of its kind across the world. It will feature seven inversions and possess the steepest launch of its type in the world with a 105° thrust. The latest addition to Europa-Park will take riders on-board a 1,385-metre (4543ft) track and promises a turbo charged trip and an electric atmosphere. “When the new coaster opens in the 2024 summer season, a 28-metre-high (92ft) tower is enthroned above the station - the centrepiece of the experiments of inventor Nikola Tesla, born in what is now Croatia. The tower will catapult guests with cosmic energy on the action-packed ride through Croatia,” is how Europa-Park set the scene for a truly cosmic experience.

In addition to the ride’s unveiling, a new 4D film produced by Mack Magic called Voltron 4D will be shown at Europa-Park’s Magic Cinema 4D starting this autumn. The 12-minute live-action film will show visitors immersing themselves in a variety of experiments linked to electricity by the pioneering Croatian engineer and physicist Tesla.

An adventure for the Electric ages awaits in 2024.



3 MEGAFOBIA REOPENS AT OAKWOOD WALES

Megafobia has awoken once more at **Oakwood** theme park in the UK, following a £1.6m upgrade.

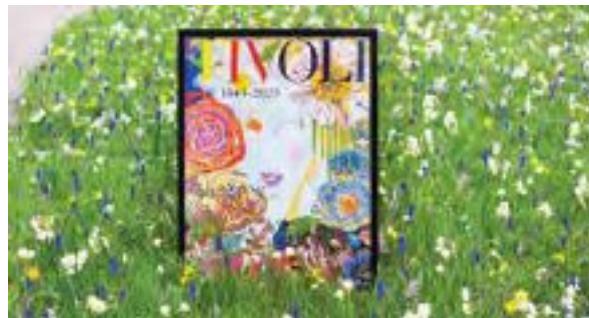
The thrilling wooden roller coaster first gave riders thrills in 1996 and thanks to track maintenance and enhancements, Megafobia is now ready for modern day usage.

US-based coaster design and construction company The Gravity Group has been tasked with its tracking upgrades and Oakwood has high hopes for the second coming of Megafobia, ‘promising an adrenaline-pumping experience like no other’.

The ride reopening is enhanced further at night thanks to the park illuminating its track and areas thanks to its After Dark event.



4 TIVOLI GARDENS CELEBRATES 180 YEARS



Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen, Denmark, reached a milestone moment in its history this summer. The park is celebrating 180 years since its founder, Georg Carstensen, first welcomed visitors to the gardens on the very first opening day.

Fast forward to now and Tivoli Gardens has become a Danish cultural heritage and the nation's biggest tourist attraction. Naturally, the park acknowledged the anniversary celebration, which took place from 14 to 20 August and included entertainment offerings as well as anniversary deals. On the park's actual anniversary day, 15 August, there were celebratory concerts.

CEO of Tivoli Gardens, Susanne Mørk Koch, spoke prior to

5 SILVERTON ATTRACTION OPENS AT WALIBI BELGIUM

Walibi Belgium officially opened its new ride Silverton this summer.

With 12 suspended gondolas in the form of steam locomotives, which are located in a mill, Silverton is the brainchild of Italian company Technical Park, which has created the attraction based on its prototype sidecar XL.

Walibi Belgium has created a steampunk-style village square in a throwback to the Wild West; while riders on board have full control by swinging their gondola up and down themselves.



the anniversary celebrations: “Many people from Denmark and abroad have their own fond memories of Tivoli Gardens, and over the generations the amusement park, which opened in 1843, has received many visitors.

“Tivoli Gardens’ DNA has always been for everyone to share, and we look forward to offering all our guests a host of extra experiences during the anniversary. The festive programme extends over several days, where together with our visitors we will pay tribute to all the good old classical traditions as well as the innovations that have ensured Tivoli Gardens’ existence for 180 years.”

America News

The latest news and announcements

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



Severn Lamb serves Carillon Historical Park with 1851 locomotive

The latest train project of Severn Lamb has commenced its service with an 1851 locomotive delivered to Carillon Historical Park in Dayton, Ohio, USA.

The train is an almost full-size replica of the locomotive Cincinnati - the first passenger train to travel to Cincinnati with the Hamilton & Dayton Railroad, beginning in 1851.

The project comes with a significant outlay at \$10m (£8m) and gave riders its first ride on 2 May.

InterPark took to the tracks for a leisurely chat with Patrick Lamb, Managing Director of Severn Lamb.

How does it feel to have recreated the 1851 locomotive?

"I am proud to oversee the designers and manufacturers of Dayton's new railroad. We are a third generation family

business that specialises in realising projects such as this - which Brady (Brady Kress, president and CEO of Dayton History) and his team have conceptualised.

"For over 70 years we have been delivering similar projects, and for me personally, nearly 20, but I have to say, none quite as special as this one. It's been quite a journey, the results of which are fabulous.

"Today has been my first time back since 2016 and it's a struggle to put into words the completed project, yes the train and the track, but also - and absolutely key - the civils infrastructure, the train barn, and the remaining civils. It's difficult to put into perspective what Brady and his team have achieved.

"We have been involved with all of Disney's modern-day railroads, we recently delivered three fully custom battery electric trains themed as 1950s oil trucks to Qatar, which were pretty amazing, we've delivered railroads to Europe, Asia, Africa, Central and South America, we've put railways underground, supplied ones powered by diesel, lpg, live steam, electric, but what we have done here with Brady tops them all.

"The combination of the site and setting, the infrastructure, buildings, civils, track, and the train, is what makes this





railroad quite so incredible and something that we are so grateful to have been involved with."

How did the project begin?

"It started back in 2013 when Brady and Severn Lamb were first introduced. Brady shared his vision, and we began looking at the best way of making it a reality. In 2016 I first visited Dayton, walked the site and got a really good feel for what Dayton was about. We got a first-hand insight into Brady's vision. This is also where I first saw a model of the Cincinnati - the locomotive that would become the design foundation for Dayton's new railroad."

What were the challenges of constructing the train and its technical specifics?

"During pre-engineering and after several years of on/off discussions in 2020 it was decided that it had to be a 3ft gauge as anything smaller in scale would not be in keeping with the vision and the rest of the site. At this time we began work on transforming our Jupiter locomotive into a close representation of the original Cincinnati that first ran in Dayton in 1851.

"Our designers and engineers worked closely with Brady, including scaling aspects from the model, to customise the locomotive and tender, modifications which included the pilot, front trucks, drive wheels, imitation valve gear, smokestack, sand and steam domes, whistle, safety valve, cab, tender theming, sign writing, steps.

"As well as focussing on the cosmetics we also designed and packaged the latest EV drive train technology. This included four large 30KW motors, 220KW battery packs

and control gear. The EV powertrain had to be designed to haul 150,000lbs of train at 6mph around the one-mile loop including 3% grades for a full day's operation.

"2021 saw us go into detailed design and manufacturing. This saw the projects team mobilise the detailed design, engineers complete and procurement and production kick in. Parts of the production included making new patterns for the drive wheels, having the wheels cast and machined, and having tyres fitted, a process which would not have been too far away from the original.

"The subsequent 18 months saw us put in 10,000 hours of design and production to create Jane Ellen. A true blend of tradition and today's latest electric powertrain technology.

Towards the end of 2022 she went through Factory Acceptance Testing before being wrapped and shipped over to Dayton. Travelling on a flat rack container, the journey across the pond took 10 days on the ocean. Once she arrived at Dayton and was unloaded our team of engineers commissioned her and handed her over to Brady's team.

During this time, in addition to creating the rolling stock, our team also designed, supplied, and installed the track for the one mile journey through Carillon Historical Park. I'm told this included using the world's only 3ft gauge rail tamper."

What is the route that passengers will enjoy?

"The train journeys along a one-mile track within the park, which takes 12 minutes. The locomotive caters for 120 passengers through open-air coaches and the train leaves its station three times an hour.

"The journey takes passengers through the park showcasing areas and views they might not have seen before. The tracks also cross a bridge that is special to Dayton. It's a con-span bridge structure, which was actually invented in Dayton and (con-span bridges) have installations all over the world.

Can you reveal any details on your next project?

"With regards to our next projects, there are two 24ins Gauge Lincolns and four road trams in the pipeline for Central America, plus one diesel to battery conversion for a client in the Far East."



Asia News

The latest news and announcements

1 ‘FLOATING CITY’ NOW A REALITY FOR INDONESIA

Indonesia is set to be home to a luxurious retail complex and floating city, known as **Batavia PIK** thanks to a partnership between Legacy Entertainment and Indonesian developers, Agung Sedayu Group (ASG) and Salim Group.

Phase one of Batavia PIK is the start of a vision of a huge development by Pantai Indah Kapuk (PIK). The retail complex opened in May with phase two opening towards the end of the year.

California-based Legacy Entertainment was tasked in creating this unique tourism destination with Batavia PIK becoming the world's first overwater retail, dining, and entertainment complex. It is a modern-day feat of engineering and creativity as the complex is built entirely over an inlet from the Java Sea. When fully functional, its overwater boardwalks will connect over 53 leasable facilities and entertainment facilities. The retail complex will feature a whole host of beautiful and innovative decorations such as an eye-catching blue whale spouting water.

Batavia PIK has the environment firmly in mind. The complex is part of the Environmentally Sustainable Design

(ESD) and uses water and waste management, eco-friendly materials, and other green technologies.

“Our inspiration comes from Batavia city as the trade centre in the colonial era of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, dubbed as the ‘Queen of the East,’ says Natalia Kusumo, CEO of Commercials & Hotels Division 2 Amantara - Agung Sedayu Group. “The port city, now called Jakarta, is famous for its beauty and as a melting pot where various nations gathered and traded. The resulting cultural assimilation thus influenced architecture, arts, culinary, and other aspects of local cultures.”

Technologically advanced but with heritage in mind, Batavia PIK is viewed as a literal bridge between the past and the future. The meeting of the past with the present and future is a key concept found within the near-28,000sqm Batavia PIK complex.

“Colonial-style windows and arches, for example, blend together with rattan weaves and indigenous building materials to embody a tropical vernacular style,” is how Batavia PIK described its identity.

And before it is even finished, Batavia has already been acknowledged with an award - as ‘Best Retail Development’ by the PropertyGuru Asia Property Awards 2022.

Taylor Jeffs, CEO Legacy Entertainment, sat down with InterPark to discuss the wondrous floating city project that is Batavia PIK.

What is the thinking behind Batavia PIK?

“Batavia is only the first of several projects we’ve been developing with developer ASG for PIK 2 that tackles the question ‘what is the future of the mall?’. The overall guiding thought is that no matter what changes, or no matter how consumer habits evolve, people will always want to eat





FUN HOUSES



SWING RIDES



BUMPER CARS



DARK RIDES



FLAT RIDES

VENETIAN CAROUSELS



SERNAGLIA (TV) - ITALY

TEL +39.0438.966291

BERTAZZON@BERTAZZON.COM

WWW.BERTAZZON.COM



BERTAZZON

The Carousel Company

AMUSEMENT RIDES

MADE IN ITALY SINCE 1952

Asia News

The latest news and announcements

together and be entertained together, so as long as we stick to that idea, we can have some degree of confidence that these developments will be commercially viable long-term.

"In the case of Batavia specifically, the existing canal offered us the chance to do something really unique and fun. In every poll that comes out, Asian consumers list the Maldives as their top aspirational travel destination, so what if we could bring the idea of an overwater villa experience closer to home? We explored a variety of options ranging from lining the canal with leasable venues, and luckily the client agreed that the most interesting option was one in which the entire complex is constructed over the waterway."

How long have you been planning this project?

"In our world where a new project often takes five to seven years to come to reality, Batavia was born in the blink of an eye. Design began in 2020 and was completed in early 2021.

With the first phase opening almost exactly two years later makes this one of the quickest projects we've ever been part of."

Can you describe the design process and how you remained faithful to Indonesian culture?

"For this, we had to put our full trust in our friends at Amantara, the local design partner. Batavia, as you know, was the Dutch colonial name for Jakarta for over 300 years. Striking the balance between old and new, Dutch, and Indonesian was a very sensitive high-wire act for which they should get the lion's share of the credit."

How did you feel seeing this unique tourism project come to fruition?

"Any time we get a chance to do something new, it's a huge win. Often in Asia, we face a little bit of reluctance to break the rules and push boundaries. However, from our experience, Indonesia is all about taking creative risks and breaking barriers. This is embodied in the ground-breaking dark rides we delivered in 2019 for Trans Studio where we did things even we weren't sure were possible, and here with ASG we're able to do it again."

How many visitors are expected?

"No attendance projections were ever shared with us. That said, there will be 53 leasable spaces in total once later phases of the project come online near the end of this year."



2 INTAMIN REVVED UP FOR LAUNCH OF ZOKKON



Intamin's new launch motorbike coaster **Zokkon** has been unveiled at Fuji-Q Highland in Japan.

One of the country's most popular amusement parks, located in the Fuji Five Lake region at the foot of Mount Fuji, the new attraction utilises Intamin's most powerful LSM propulsion system to propel its riders on-board the entertaining multi-launch coaster.

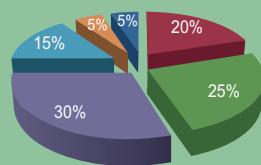
Zokkon packs a punch in a compact space, it has a height of 24-metres (79ft) and races over a distance of 1,300-metres (4265ft) at top speeds of over 70km/h (43mph).

The motorbike themed ride features four powerful LSM launches of which one is a backward launch right after it reaches the spike taking riders backwards to an indoor show scene. Passengers get to enjoy 12 airtime moments and fun ride elements. The futuristic 14-seater motorbike themed trains, with integrated sound and lighting come in a side-by-side arrangement with two passengers per vehicle, in combination with the individual lap-bar paired with foamed seats.



INDUSTRY NEWS · PROJECT REPORTS · INSIGHT

DISTRIBUTION & QUANTITIES



- Investors 20%
- Operator 25%
- Manufacturers 30%
- Service Providers 15%
- Agents 5%
- Others 5%

8000+

Aiming at Asia · Focusing on China

CHINA MARKET
Depth Insight

WECHAT
30000+



Ten major categories

Updated annually

Specialist analysis

Global Attractions and Amusements Catalogue has multiple categories and a wide range of products from all over the world

China News

The latest news and announcements

1 VEKOMA CREATES REVOLUTIONARY COASTER IN CHINA



Dutch ride manufacturer **Vekoma** has created a multi-launch coaster concept that is the first of its kind thanks to its forwards-backwards element.

The ride, called Cloud Shuttle, will be located in a new theme park in Xuzhou Fantawild Wonderland, located in Jiangsu, China.

Cloud Shuttle is a super boomerang roller coaster and features a mixture of high-speed launches, vertical drops, four inversions and 10 airtime elements allied to a compact design. Utilising a Triple LSM launch through the station coupled with two LSM boosts, its forwards LSM launch reaches 40km/h (25mph) while its backwards LSM launch has a maximum speed of 76km/h (47mph). The ride has a 45-metre (148ft) vertical free fall with three seconds of zero gravity while its ride capacity is 800 people per hour. Riders enjoy 4G sensations on board Cloud Shuttle with a top speed of 94kmh/h (59mph), while reaching a height of 50-metres (164ft) with a vertical spike topping 52.5-metres (172ft). The action-packed ride is visible from all over the park due to its striking yellow structure and covers the park over a distance of 436-metres (1,430ft).



The most eye-catching element of the ride is its forwards and backwards experience so riders can ride both ways making for a unique two rides in one function.

Discussing the Super Boomerang design further is Benjamin Bloemendaal, Head of Concept Engineering at Vekoma Rides: "The Super Boomerang was designed as a spiritual successor to both the classic Boomerang and the GIB, using a sit-down vehicle like the former, but having the stature of the latter. According to our present-day design philosophy, the new track design was also to sport more variation in ride elements, while focusing on airtime and hang time rather than downforce."





CAE
CAE 2024

39th

CAAPA
ATTRACTI0NS
EXPO

2024 中国(北京)国际 游乐设施设备博览会

CHINA BEIJING ATTRACTIONS EXPO 2024

See you in Beijing in 2024

Venue: SHOUGANG Exhibition and Convention Center

地点：首钢会展中心

China Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions

主办：中国游艺机游乐园协会

Dates: March 18-20 2024

时间：2024年3月18-20日

Lily@leisureandattractions.com

www.chinaattractionsexpo.org

China News

The latest news and announcements

"Other key drivers to the final design included having a unique and iconic aesthetic and a footprint that could be easily integrated in different park plans. These parameters, combined with more energy and airtime-focused track elements, lead to a long-stretched, slender design rather than the traditional square base area."



"Additionally, we opted for a maintenance-free LSM drive to avoid the complex hoisting and catching mechanisms from the days of old. This choice doesn't only improve reliability and reduce maintenance cost, it also provides for a more dynamic ride experience and a higher single-train throughput."

"Using Vekoma's proven design MK1101 train system and a six-coach, 24-seater train, the Super Boomerang reaches a capacity of 800 people per hour. To obtain an unobstructed ride experience, the vehicle has a lapbar-only restraint system with a flexible vest. Furthermore, the ride uses the state-of-the-art LSM launch system, which is the most maintenance-friendly driving system available in the market."



2 SHANGHAI DISNEY RESORT CLEANS UP WITH LATEST IDEA



Shanghai Disney Resort visitors will have more hygiene and hand cleaning facilities in the future with the introduction of disinfection and sterilisation products on site.

Disinfection and sterilisation products will be available at 300 handwashing stations, in addition to 70 hand sanitiser dispensers located across the park and at the resort's hotels, Disneytown and Wishing Star Park.

The campaign is the fruit of an agreement between Disney China and leading hygiene and cleansing brand, Dettol.

President and General Manager of Shanghai Disney Resort Joe Schott stated that "welcoming Dettol as its official cleaning and hygiene provider, it's confident in maintaining high standards of cleanliness at the park."

Dettol will exclusively present 'Hand Hygiene Tips' at handwashing facilities throughout the resort, which serve as practical reminders and focuses on the importance of proper handwashing using the "seven-step hand washing technique."

Custom-themed hand-washing sinks will also be added in the future under the multi-year partnership.

Dettol has also signed a consumer product licensing agreement with Disney China with co-brand products expected to be launched in the near future, to acknowledge best practices towards personal health and hygiene.



FAMILY ADVENTURE



IAAPA
EXPO
GOLD SPONSOR 2023

VIENNA
26-28 SEPTEMBER
BOOTH #A1609

NEW 2023 - FAMILY LAUNCH COASTER 'LIGHTNING'
FURUVIK, SWEDEN



NEW 2023 - FAMILY BOOMERANG 'LUNA'
LISEBERG, SWEDEN

DISCOVER MORE

Our team of specialists in concept design, engineering and manufacturing can deliver the most thrilling experience for your guests! Whether you want to create a new family coaster that appeals to children, teens, parents and grandparents, are looking for a new heart-pounding experience to delight thrill seekers or want to develop any other attraction that will make your venue a success, Vekoma will assist you to discover more.

We look forward to meeting you at **IAAPA EXPO EUROPE!**

WWW.VEKOMA.COM

MAXIMUM THRILL ULTIMATE COMFORT



WILDCAT LOOPING COASTER 'FØNIX'
FÅRUP SOMMERLAND, DENMARK


VEKOMA

Middle East News

The latest news and announcements

1 SCRUFFY DOG CREATIVE GROUP SECURES TENDER FOR SIX FLAGS



Scruffy Dog Creative Group has secured the tender for **Six Flags**, Qiddiya in Saudi Arabia. Under the terms of the agreement, Scruffy Dog Creative Group will provide

development design, build, delivery, and installation of several thematic features, animatronic elements, and installations for the new theme park in Qiddiya.

The investment of £15.7m was awarded by Bouygues Bâtiment International (BBI) and Saudi Almabani General Contractors (AGC). BBI, which is a subsidiary of Bouygues Construction, has developed a successful reputation for its construction expertise and global presence. Meanwhile, AGC, is a notable entity in the sphere of construction.

On the announcement of the tender, Malik Al Asadi, SDCG's Projects Director said: "Scruffy Dog Creative Group is excited to utilise its outstanding creative fabrication and build capabilities to bring this project to life. With our unwavering passion, expertise, and commitment to pushing boundaries, the team is ready to exceed expectations."

Joe Bright, SDCG's CEO adds: "It is truly exciting that the group is able to continue our relationship with Qiddiya from design into delivery and be part of the Kingdom's first major theme park and entertainment flagship. In addition, it is a privilege to be working alongside two world-renowned companies."

Thanks to the successful tender, Scruffy Dog Creative Group has enhanced its position as an important reference in the entertainment sector throughout the Middle East.

2 SEVEN AND TRIOTECH IN TRANSFORMERS PARTNERSHIP

A host of Transformers attractions are set to land in Saudi Arabia due to a partnership between Saudi Entertainment Ventures (Seven) and Triotech.

Triotech has been enlisted by Seven to create an interactive dark ride based on the sci-fi film franchise hit. The IP attraction will be firstly installed at Seven's entertainment destination in the Al Hamra district of Riyadh city, with two additional attractions set to open at other Seven entertainment destinations in the Kingdom.

Triotech will be tasked with the design, engineering, manufacturing, and installation of the interactive dark rides.

Seven, is making a significant investment in its attractions to the tune of SAR50bn (£10.8bn) to create 21 integrated entertainment destinations with more than 150 innovative attractions across 14 cities. Triotech commented that, "the Transformers attractions will feature thrilling state-of-the-art rides and captivating environments that will have guests fully immersed in the action-packed world of the iconic brand."

To complement the ride, there will be specially developed merchandise, and themed food and beverage areas. "We are excited to be working with Triotech to bring the Transformers attractions to our entertainment destinations, providing our guests with a one-of-a-kind attraction," said Damien Latham, Chief Attractions Officer at Seven.



"Seven will continue to raise the standards of entertainment, creating innovative experiences for our guests by developing exceptional entertainment experiences in the Kingdom."

Ernest Yale, President and CEO of Triotech, added: "We have an extensive track record in adapting global iconic IPs to interactive attractions, which positions us as a partner of choice for Seven's Transformers projects in Saudi Arabia. "Triotech will leverage its global leadership in immersive experiences and its ability to deliver turnkey attractions to make this an experience that will bring the guests into the Transformers world."

3 RAMAT GAN ZOO GETS ENVIRONMENTAL WITH DOTTO TRAINS

Italian tourist-train manufacturer Dotto Trains has recently partnered with Ramat Gan zoo in Tel Aviv, Israel, which has taken delivery of its electric Muson River locomotive.

The project involved both technical staff of Dotto Trains and staff at the zoo to develop and design the train as desired, meaning it is now possible to visit the 250-acre site of safari and open-air zoo aboard the new electric Muson River locomotive. The all-electric train allows the transportation of almost 60 people in a silent and ecological way without disturbing the freely moving animals.

Jonathan Amiel, Mechanical Operations Manager at the zoo, commented: "The electric train is the first of its kind in Israel and we are very pleased with its performance and ability to cater to our needs. Our visitors just

love it. Personally speaking, the Dotto team is fantastic, hospitable, and very easy to communicate with, allowing for the development and design of the train to meet our and the customers' needs with ease."

Dotto Trains constantly strives to reduce its environmental impact, also investing in R&D of new electric mobility solutions and suggests this mobility solution for its clients, to learn more about how the company could help your operations head to their booth at IAAPA Europe.



**26-28 Sept. | 2023
MESSE WIEN, AUSTRIA
BOOTH A-1306**

DISCOVER OUR NEW ELECTRIC TRAIN



Waterparks News

The latest news and announcements

1 AQUA PARK OPENS AT FOXLAKE ADVENTURES

Scotland has a new home for water adventure as **Aqua Park**, located in Dunbar in the east of Edinburgh, has opened to the public.

Aqua Park forms part of the entertainment menu at Foxlake Adventures and is geared up for families and single sessions and is ideal for birthday celebrations. A session at Aqua Park takes 50 minutes and challenges all of guests' intelligence and physicality to lodge the fastest time. Aqua Park draws parallels from Ninja Warrior style activities and features attractions such as the Ninja-Jump, Dragon Tail and Temple. There is also an inflatable tower scaling 3.8-metres (12.5ft) called Mount Rainier and the two-metre (6.7ft) Mount Baker. Aqua Park is also fitted with a freefall slide and tyre run.

James Barbour, Director at Aqua Park outlined to InterPark what to expect from a day out at the water attraction.

Can you tell me more about the inspiration behind Aqua Park?

"The inspiration began following a devastating storm here at the end of 2021. Foxlake Adventures activities mainly centre around our main lake where we have wakeboarding cables, Foxfall, our ropes course over water, open water swimming and Ringo rides. In 2017 we opened our first main dryland 'large group' activity called ZipTrail. This was a dual zipline course through our woodland with 38 different ziplines / elements. It was very popular and attracted over 15,000 participants a year."

"At the end of 2021, Storm Arwen hit the east coast of Scotland with deadly hurricane force, northly winds, which



Photos © Foxlake Aqua Park

devastated thousands of hectares of woodland in the region, including the woods at Foxlake. Approximately 90% of our ZipTrail course was severely damaged. This was a big setback for the business and after 18 months we finally received an insurance pay out for the loss of the course.

"The team at Foxlake did consider options for building a replacement ZipTrail course. However, many of our trees had been lost and the ones left were not of desirable quality to construct a new course. We looked at the option of artificial poles; however, this would have been too costly, and we also felt it would compromise a replacement course. We were also worried that building new structures in woodland could be at risk from future extreme weather events.

"Due to this, our attention turned to an Aqua Park as we were already operating them at three of our other sites in the UK. We knew how popular they were with customers, so it seemed a 'no brainer' in opting for an Aqua Park to replace the Ziptrail. Due to the fact we had already used all of our existing water space, the only option we had was to dig a new lake to install it."

What was the timeline from initial brainstorming to construction and completion?

"From October - December 2022 we went through the initial brainstorm, feasibility, and design phase. A planning application was subsequently submitted to our local authority and planning permission was granted on 17 February 2023. On-site work then commenced on 20 February. Construction of the lake and installation of the Aqua Park was completed by the end of April and the park





www.watertoys.com

info@watertoys.com

1 866 833 8580 | 905 649 5047

opened for the first time to visitors on 6 May this year. The speed at which we managed to construct this new activity was only possible by a massive team effort and the reliability of contractors."

What were the challenges posed by creating the attraction?

"Apart from really short timelines to complete this project by the start of our 2023 season, we also had the massive issue of what to do with 28,000 tonnes of material that had to be dug out to create the new Aqua Park lake. To remove this material by road to the nearest landfill site 15 miles away, would have proven too costly and would have slowed down construction greatly. This would have also increased the project's carbon footprint substantially. This was solved when a local farmer adjacent to our site asked if he could have this material. Some of his fields were exceptionally sandy and it just so happened the material we were going to dig out had a high clay content, so was ideal for making his ground more fertile. Not only did he offer to take the spoil, but he also provided five tractors and trailers to move it the short distance of one mile from our site.

"The next challenge was safeguarding a clean and reliable water supply to the new lake as we have noticed our existing water supply diminishing over time due to our changing climate. The supply has become less reliable over the past five years and with the addition of this new activity came the challenge of obtaining additional water. It was decided to commission the drilling of a new water bore hole on-site. This involved the service of a water diviner and then a drilling rig. After a few days of drilling a very productive source of water was hit at 72-metres deep, exactly where the water diviner predicted it would be. This has given us a new reliable source of 50 cubic metres of water a day, which will keep our lakes topped up in dry periods."



What can visitors expect from the experience?

"Any visitor coming to the Foxlake Aqua Park can expect amazing customer service from our great team of qualified staff and instructors. Customers can expect to be looked after throughout the check-in and kit-up process right through to having an amazing time on the course. Our Aqua Park might not be the largest out there, but it has something for everyone, and you are guaranteed to come off the course with a massive smile on your face."

How many visitors are you expecting to come to Aqua Park?

"In our visit season we are expecting 30,000 visitors and currently on track to hit this number."

What was the total investment?

£250m

Complete the phrase: 'A trip to the Aqua Park at Foxlake Adventure...'

"...will put a massive smile on your face and leave you buzzing."



corner of the pool. ADG designed the pool to feature in-water sun shelves for guests to enjoy the sun while still making the most of the water and surrounded the pool with comfortable lounge seating.

"We know that people in Houston love water, so we definitely wanted to have a water component but create something different," continued Lawson. "That's why we worked with ADG to deliver a wave pool, tidal river and an island pool along with a number of other things."

It is the latest achievement for Meridiana, which has received several awards such as 'Best Community of the Year', 'Community Recreation Center of the year', and 'Best Landscape Design of the Year'.

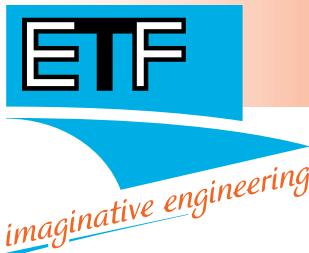
2 NEW ADG WATER PARK IN TEXAS OPENS

A new two-acre waterpark called **Adventure Cove** has been opened at residential community Meridiana in Iowa Colony, Texas.

Featuring a wave pool, tidal river, fitness centre, large pavilion, and food truck park among other activities, "it's like having a family waterpark right in the neighbourhood," says Matt Lawson of Meridiana. "Amenities make a community and they're a big reason why we continue to have such success."

Manufacturer ADG took on the role of design/builder on the project, as well as supplying all specialty wave equipment for the property.

The new Tidal River covers 550ft in length and releases waves up to 2.5ft tall every five seconds; the river channel is an average width of 16ft. The new amenity village is also home to a 9,300sqft wave pool powered by ADG's wave technology and featuring a gradual beach entry with family-friendly waves. There is also an adventure pool where guests can have fun playing water basketball with the situated hoops in the



Your specialist for people movers
and interactive dark rides

www.etf.nl



**EXCELLENCE IN FUN
AROUND THE WORLD**



 **GOSETTO®**

t. +39 0438 892847 / 0438 892852

f. +39 0438 898593

info@gosetto.com

WWW.GOSSETTO.COM



Show News

Revolutionising revenue generation: the value of real-time pricing strategies

Theme parks face heavy competition in the experience economy, which is why most of them look for ways to entice visitors and deliver the best value. Technology and particularly AI has a crucial role to play to help boost this bottom line.

Leading eCommerce platform innovation, Convious, is forging the way with dynamic pricing strategies, a game-changer that adapts prices based on various factors in real-time.

Ahead of IAAPA Europe, where Convious will be giving a talk on 'Dynamic pricing with Plopsaland', InterPark sat down with Andy Povey, VP of Business Development in UK & US at Convious, who shared insights into the benefits of dynamic pricing strategies.

"Real-time pricing is a data-driven approach that calculates prices based on market conditions, customer behaviour, demand patterns and other relevant factors," explains Povey. "This not only empowers operators to bolster their booking numbers, but also fosters strategic revenue forecasting from increased visibility driven by advanced bookings."

"Traditional static pricing models often fail to capture the details of supply and demand fluctuations, leading to missed revenue opportunities and suboptimal customer experiences."

Convious recently added two new strategies to its real-time pricing offering, in response to new trends in purchasing behaviour across leisure industry destinations.

"Our new Global Pricing strategies hinge around rewarding customers for two types of behaviour: early bird purchases and being amongst the first to buy on a particular date," says Povey.

Empowering Operators through Early Bird Incentives

The first pricing strategy is the Early Bird pricing algorithm, which rewards guests for purchasing in advance, with the price set to increase every specified number of days. The further into the future the visit is being planned, the lower the price.

"By encouraging early bookings through this strategy, we empower operators to secure a steady stream of revenue long before the actual



experience takes place. This is valuable for businesses that operate in seasonal cycles, allowing them to gain visitor insights before the season even begins. The Early Bird approach not only benefits customers with budget-friendly options but also equips operators with greater cash flow predictability, helping to drive better financial planning and operational efficiency. This also enables operators to be better prepared and plan their operations accordingly by having advanced visibility for which days are going to be busy and therefore when more staff will be required, all contributing to enhancing the guest experience."

Create Booking Urgency

Convious' second strategy is the Buy First, Pay Less incentive, which rewards guests for being among the first to buy for a particular date. With this model, the price increases with every defined number of tickets sold, regardless of the time of purchase or the duration before the visit. The concept is simple yet powerful: as more tickets are sold, the price gradually increases.

"This is a great way of increasing bookings for traditionally slower days and generating higher revenue during peak periods. Beyond this, it can enable better operational planning, helping businesses to allocate resources such as staff and F&B orders more effectively, and of course help to enhance the overall customer experience," Povey says.

For both pricing models, each operator defines the steps and time frame in which the price increases, using the Convious AI to analytically inform these decisions based on the trends and buying habits of their unique audience, defined objectives and information about what parameters affect visitation at the type of venue, such as weather and time of day.

"We've identified three core strategies to inform which algorithm will be most effective: optimising revenue, increasing maximum tickets sold and delivering even visitor distribution. Our algorithms are continually learning and evolving to deliver the best results, reducing manual work for operators and ensuring better experiences for guests," says Povey.

Convious' early bird incentives and first-mover advantage has the potential to revolutionise how operators harness the power of pricing to drive success in the experience economy.



Treasure Hunt: The Ride dark ride opens

Treasure Hunt: The Ride has opened courtesy of a joint partnership between Alterface, Sally Dark Rides and Daniels Wood Land (DWL).

Treasure Hunt: The Ride is an interactive dark ride adventure in Monterey, California which takes guests on a modern-day pirate adventure in search of Captain Bouchard's lost treasure.

The ride was officially launched on 22 July introducing an exclusive experience to visitors and residents of Monterey. With physical targets, including props and characters and real-time interactive media, Treasure Hunt's interactive elements are 'memorable and fun.'

Big screens fill several scenes and projection mapping animates various set pieces.

Stephane Battaille, CEO of Alterface said: "We are delighted to have had the opportunity to collaborate with Sally Dark Rides and Daniels Wood Land on this project. Our team worked hard to help create an interactive experience that immerses guests in the world of pirates and treasure hunting.

"We believe this unforgettable adventure, which combines cutting-edge technology with immersive theming and interactive gameplay, will thrill and delight guests of all ages." Jeff Moser, general manager for Treasure Hunt at Daniels Wood Land, commented: "I've always been very confident in the theming aspects of the ride because that is where our company specialises.



"Any concerns about how the digital targeting would work were quickly squashed by the team of Francois, Brice and Nicolas at Alterface. They were extremely knowledgeable about the equipment, very diligent in their work, and unquestionably played a central role in the project's success!"

"We really enjoy working with the Alterface team," said Rich Hill, Chief Creative Officer with Sally Dark Rides.

"They have provided interactive systems for almost a dozen of our dark rides to date. The interactive system they created over the years functions well and thoroughly engages guests on our dark rides. Alterface continues to push the boundaries of interactive gameplay and introduce new technology and elements with each new project."

Additional project partners with Treasure Hunt: The Ride include: Gosesto (track-based ride system), Pure Imagination Studios (gameplay and media), TechniLux (lighting) and Extreme Engineering (opening elevator scene).

To learn more about this exciting project and collaboration head to Alterface's IAAPA Europe stand.

**WE BRING
YOUR STORY
ALIVE!**

INTERACTIVE ATTRACTIONS
for every venue and age

alterface

www.alterface.com



IAAPA[®]
EXPO

CALLING ALL MEMORY MAKERS

Dream designers. Fun creators. No matter your role in the attractions industry, IAAPA Expo connects you to revenue-boosting insights, groundbreaking innovations, and a supportive community of passionate professionals. This is your time to network, gain knowledge, and grow your business.

EDUCATION: NOV. 13–16, 2023

SHOW FLOOR: NOV. 14–17, 2023

ORLANDO, FL, U.S.



REGISTER TODAY!

SAVE UP TO 30%

IAAPA.org/IAAPAEexpo



#IAAPAEexpo | #IAAPAEexpoNorthAmerica



**„BRAVO INTAMIN! THAT IS A GREAT
GREAT RIDE - FANTASTIC!“**

COASTER STUDIOS

**„THIS RIDE IS UNBELIEVABLE -
IT HAS EVERYTHING“**

COASTER DASH

SEE YOU AT
IAAPA EXPO EUROPE
Booth #A-2313

LSM LAUNCH COASTER

LEARN MORE



INTAMIN



Zamperla

PARK INVESTMENTS

By Emma Davidson

If you're a regular reader of InterPark, you will know that the past 12 months have been an exciting time for theme parks and attractions across the globe. The post COVID industry has bounced back brighter than ever, and with that comes brand-new rides, innovative technologies, milestone anniversaries and more from some of the biggest players in the game.

Looking back over the past year, what stands out the most is the desire and need for immersive theme parks and attractions. Getting back to a sense of 'normality' post COVID has, at times, felt completely impossible, but the welcoming parks filled with their illuminated neon rides and comforting scent of fried donuts has been craved by those looking for a sense of nostalgia, as well as those wanting to create lasting family moments.

Kicking things off, we saw **Disney celebrate a milestone 100 years** in 2023. The company, which was set up in the October of 1923 by brothers Walt and Roy O Disney, has gone on to be not only a global leader in the animation field, but also in the theme park industry. To celebrate its anniversary, the company's Disneyland Anaheim resort introduced the brand-new attraction 'Mickey's Toontown'.

The first ride that opened, 'Mickey & Minnie's Runaway Railway', is a family-friendly attraction like what you'll find in Disney World's Hollywood Studios. On the ride, visitors jump aboard a train driven by Disney star Goofy as they're transported to the animated world of Mickey Mouse. The rest of the attraction opened in early March 2023 and now serves as a spot for families with younger children to play together.

Another recognisable theme park, **Legoland South Korea, welcomed the Lego Factory Adventure Ride** this year, a turnkey attraction created by Holovis. The unique ride utilises Holovis' DeepSmarts and HoloTrac platforms to identify and analyse different characteristics of each guest in the AGV ride vehicle, accurately tracking and replicating their hand and upper-body movements.



Holovis

This is achieved by the HoloTrac sensor arrays hidden in the scenic elements off-board the ride system and throughout the attraction. These sensor arrays integrate with the HoloTrac's Computer Vision and AI systems, transforming guests into life-sized LEGO Minifigures.

As this attraction used the very latest computer vision and AI systems within the HoloTrac platform, there was an intensive development and testing period on a like-for-like ride testing rig at Holovis HQ. This allowed the team to configure the unique sensor arrays and develop the on-board processing systems required to deliver the highly challenging and complex attribute recognition solution (hairstyle, gender, shirt colour, glasses etc) and ensure system accuracy.#

Over at Legoland New York, **WhiteWater worked on the brand-new Lego City Water Playground** with four fun water slides, 95 play features, and a 318-gallon tipping bucket. The highly themed AquaPlay 1050 is a Lego fantasy come true. Additionally, WhiteWater launched the new, large-scale Island Waterpark at Showboat, Atlantic City in New Jersey.

With 100,000sqft of indoor space, Island Waterpark at Showboat is a \$100m investment that's the world's largest indoor beachfront water park - and the largest indoor water park in North America under a single retractable roof. The interior recreates the shops, amusements, and vibe of the famous boardwalk.

Together with aquatic thrills and plenty of space to relax and socialise, this water park is a destination with multi-generational appeal. It has children-friendly attractions and, at the same time, allows adults to enjoy unique leisure activities in Atlantic City that are different from the offerings of a casino. To capture a wide audience, WhiteWater was selected to provide a mix of aquatic attractions, with 11 water slides, two aquatic play structures, and a FlowRider Double.



Legoland New York Resort AquaPlay



Intamin

At San Diego's Sea World in the USA, **Intamin has completed the launch of Arctic Rescue**, a family-friendly thrill coaster with three launches. Passengers on the ride race through the 'Arctic' and each of the three exhilarating launches is faster than the one before with a top speed of around 65km/h (40mph). The snowmobiles allow for an exciting ride experience for each rider as they lean into banks and turns and whizz along a total of over 850-metres (2,800ft) of track.

Over at Sea World Abu Dhabi, **Zamperla has implemented four new rides across the past year**, including; WindstarZ, Rocking Tug, Junior Coaster, and Jumpin' Tower. The company combined technology and art through high-quality 'thematisation', pushing the boundaries of creativity and immersive experiences in order to captivate families and fans.



Zamperla

Sticking with the world of water-themed attractions, **ADG has opened a huge, two-acre waterpark amenity Adventure Cove at Meridiana**, a residential community in Iowa Colony. Adventure Cove features a wave pool, tidal river, fitness centre, large pavilion, food truck park and more. ADG played the role of design.builder on the project, as well as supplying all specialty wave equipment for the property. The new Tidal River is 550ft in length and dispatches waves up to 2.5ft tall every five seconds. The river channel is an average width of 16ft and includes a zero-depth beach entry.

The new amenity village is also home to a 9,300sqft wave pool powered by ADG's wave technology. The pool features a gradual beach entry with family-friendly waves for all guests and residents to enjoy. In addition to the two main anchor attractions is a 2,600sqft island adventure pool, which allows guests to swim in the flat water or engage in a game of water basketball with the situated hoops in the corner of the pool. ADG designed the pool to feature in-water sun shelves for guests to tan while still enjoying the water and surrounded the pool with comfortable lounge seating.

In Pandalang, Indonesia, **Empex Watertoys recently completed a marine themed spray park in the newly opened Wahoo Waterworld**. The management wanted an area that caters to young families, so the marine-style Aquadek climb and slide structure was designed to be the main centre point of the 650sqm area.

The preschool area, which is separate, features a toddler slide, an Aquadome, an Aquabow tunnel producing soft sprays, an Aqualab water play station, an Aquawiggle and an Aquabloom with spiral sprays. Transitioning into the area for older children the pool slopes gently down to 20cm in depth and water features increase in height and activity. Highly interactive, the Tippin' Whales vessels fill with water and randomly open on the players below. The Aquatee emits a curtain of soft water, while the Aquazig presents lateral laminar sprays for interactive play.



Empex

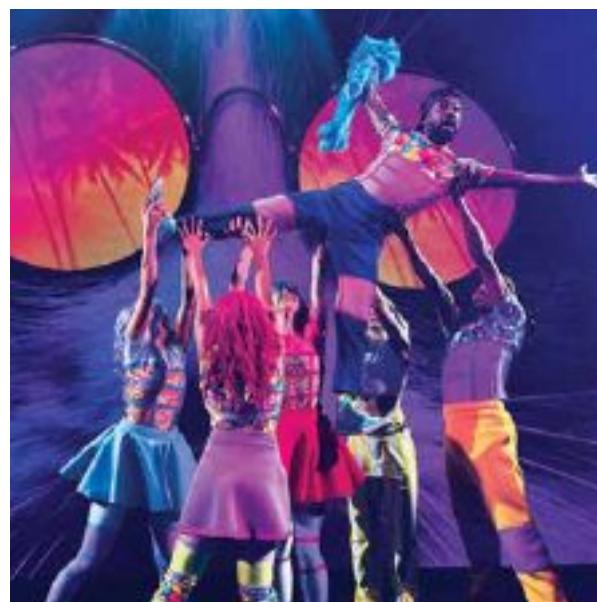


Vekoma Big Bear Mountain

Over in Sweden, **Furuvik has introduced a new Vekoma ride** - an electrifying launch coaster called Lightning. The biggest attraction in the park's history, the launch coaster accelerates right from the start and reaches a top speed of 75km/h in just three seconds. What's more, it takes riders on no less than two laps.

Sandra Wilk, CEO at Furuvik, commented: "We are thrilled to finally have this ride in place and ready for our guests, whom we have been eagerly anticipating. It's incredibly exciting, and I'm confident it will be loved by both young and old. I'm personally super excited to experience it myself."

Another company dedicated to providing one-of-a-kind experiences is RWS and this year has been no exception as the company has continued to create unforgettable spring and summer-focused attractions for guests at theme park destinations across the USA. From ideation to completion, RWS's team of creatives are currently overseeing concept and design, music and media, AV and technical, costume design and build, talent casting and recruitment, show production and operations at Hersheypark, Lost Island Themepark and Waterpark, Legoland New York, Story Land, Idlewild and Soak Zone, Santa's Village and Typhoon Texas.



RWS Luna Park_MSC Europa

RWS Global's award-winning cruise ship offerings have also greatly expanded this year. For the premiere of MSC Cruises World Europa, RWS and Ted conceived and executed an elevated guest experience by developing two new, immersive performance venues. The venues host a total of seven interactive shows that come to life each night, all completely created by RWS Global's design and production teams.

The past 12 months have also birthed some world firsts through new collaborations with recognisable industry names. In a first for Sally Dark Rides, the manufacturer launched its '**Uncharted: The Enigma of Penitence**' dark ride roller coaster at **Portaventura World** in 2023. The thrilling world first coaster is the result of a collaboration between **Sally Dark Rides and Intamin**, both renowned manufacturers of theme park attractions. Together the companies developed an all-new chapter for the globally recognised Uncharted brand.

Drawing from Uncharted's theme of exploration, treasure hunting and adventure, the new attraction features elements never experienced on a roller coaster, including; the world's first indoor quintuple/fivefold (5x) LSM launch coaster, the world's first sideways launch, Europe's first side drop on a coaster, Europe's first coaster drifting manoeuvres, Spain's first cliffhanger backward freefall element, Spain's first backward launch and Spain's first launched spike element.

Known for its work in interactive technologies, Alterface also worked alongside Sally Dark Rides on another project, Volkana at the Lost Island in Waterloo in Iowa. The park features realms themed on fire, water, earth, air and spirit. It is in the Mura (fire) realm that explorers will encounter Volkana and its imposing volcano-like facade. The fully interactive dark ride takes its name from the great god of fire, a legendary bestial of molten rock who lurks inside Lost Island. Guests must locate six statues including the sacred Ora-Tika and return it to the Temple of Fire. Both the shooting technology and the ride's interactive system were supplied by Alterface.



Sally Dark Rides Haunted Hotel witch



BoldMove Nation & Triotech LePAL ChampiFolies

Another dark ride **collaboration came from Triotech and BoldMove Nation** this year at **Le PAL theme park** in France. Champi'Folies is an interactive media-based dark ride that features the cutting-edge Smash & Reload attraction with TooMush themeing. The launch of Champi'Folies marks a significant milestone for Triotech and BoldMove Nation - the collaboration between these two leading firms has resulted in a cutting-edge ride that is a hit with guests of all ages.

With more than 1,000 animals and 31 attractions, Le PAL is based in the heart of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes and is recognised as one of the leading theme parks and zoos in France. The addition of Champi'Folies further cements its reputation as a must-visit destination for families. This exciting new attraction combines an immersive and interactive storyline with thrilling action and impressive theming. Guests are taken on an unforgettable journey through a world filled with the hilarious TooMush characters.

The number of new rides hitting parks across the globe over the past 12 months is truly endless, and



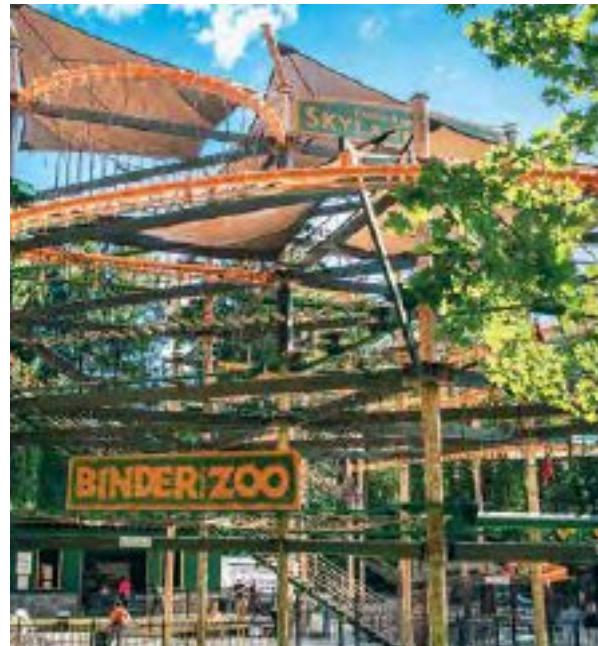
Huss Nanjing in full swing

the structure that appeared back in May this year from **Huss Park Attractions** is another notable addition. The **Giant Frisbee thrill ride at OCT Happy Valley in Nanjing** rises to a maximum passenger flying height of 43-metres, meaning that it can be seen right across the park. As visitors get closer, the gondola rushes over their heads, thanks to the elevated podium, for even more excitement.

The Giant Frisbee features a 25-metre-long pendulum that swings 120° to each side. Guests are seated within a gondola at the lower end of the pendulum, in suspended seats and facing the outside. As the pendulum reaches its full swing, riders will enjoy airtimes of -0.5g. Accelerations of +4.5g combined with a maximum speed of around 110 kilometres per hour are parameters normally associated with major roller coasters. This 40-person seating configuration, together with a large loading platform, ensures quick loading resulting in a capacity of 1000 passengers per hour. Happy Valley Nanjing is the eighth Happy Valley Park from OCT Group and can be found in the Qixia District, next to the Yangtze River. This park is a new and upgraded version of Happy Valley and is home to 41 different rides, set across six engaging themed areas. Other highlights of the Happy Time themed area, where the Giant Frisbee sits, include Rush Hour and the Star of Nanjing.

Another show-stopping attraction landed in Albury this year – the spectacular **sound and light experience 'Aurora' by Laservision**. Located in the picturesque Albury Botanic Gardens, Aurora was hosted between Friday 23 June – Sunday 16 July 2023 and metamorphosed the Botanic Gardens, redefining the natural landscape and unveiling mystical creatures through the use of holograms, lasers, interactive projections, light sculptures, immersive soundscapes, and many other sensory mediums.

Additionally, **Binder Park Zoo**, located in Battle Creek, Michigan, opened its \$2m SkyLark Ridge and Little Larks attractions last summer with the help of **RCI Adventure Products**. The three-story installation covers 15,000sqft with a height of 36ft at its highest point. The SkyLark attraction includes a variety of custom-branded elements, including the zoo's very own logo on the Ledgewalk and other elements displaying the names of donors. Additional



RCI Binder Park Zoo

elements include the Weave Walk, Rolling Log, Walk-the-Plank, five Sky Rail curved zip lines, plus a Sky Tour computer-controlled canopy tour that zips to a tower and back to the main Sky Trail ropes course.

The zoo also added a Little Larks Sky Tykes ropes course, with a Sky Rail zip rail, specifically designed for smaller adventurers under 48ins tall. This attraction uses the same specifically engineered technology as the larger Sky Trail course but scaled down in size for smaller participants. The platforms are positioned three feet off the ground, allowing children to build coordination and confidence while their adult chaperone stays close by to assist.

Rounding off our round-up of park investments with a Christmas themed ride feels criminal in the middle of summer, however **I.E. Park's work on Sky Carousel** definitely deserved a mention in our list. The attraction opened in December 2022 at **Huis Ten Bosch in Japan** to commemorate the season and the park's 30th anniversary. It comprises 68 characters and vehicles including 22 big horses, 22 medium horses, eight small horses, two pumpkin coaches, four gondolas with roof, two gondolas without roof, four spinning cups and four carriages.

"We are very happy to have had the opportunity to work with both Wing production and Huis Ten Bosch on this magnificent project," said I.E. Park. "We have enjoyed much success over the years around the world but thanks to this product we can consider ourselves as leaders in the production of carousels. We are sure that it will be a great success for HTB park."

It's clear that it has been an incredibly busy 12 months for the theme parks and attractions industry. From world first coasters to 100 years of Disney, there's been so much to explore at various venues across the globe. As summer passes and some parks close their doors until next season, many manufacturers have more up their sleeves that will be unveiled to eager guests over the next 12 months. As always, you'll find any further industry news and updates in future issues of InterPark.



Laservision Enchanted Forest

BREAK 5 DANCE

SETS THE BEAT IN EVERY PARK!



www.hussrides.com

**BOLD
MOVE
NATION**



creating happy worlds

www.boldmove-nation.com

**BOLD IDEAS REQUIRE
SMART MOVES**

**DARK RIDES
AR & VR ATTRACTIONS
DESIGN SERVICES
MEDIA, IP & THEMING**

**Visit booth B-2125
at IAAPA Expo Vienna!**



Stepping Beyond Artefacts

InterPark's Emma Davidson explores how museums are revolutionising visitor experiences with new technologies and how the line between entertaining and educating is continuing to blur.

Immersive is a word you hear a lot in the theme parks and attractions industry. Whether it's AI and VR or all-encompassing installations that play on the five senses, companies and manufacturers are constantly looking to innovate. But it's not just the technology in traditional parks that is starting to push the boundaries even further.

Museums are some of the most popular places for a family day out alongside your thrilling rides and fairgrounds. The informative yet fun venues are currently being steered by a rise in digital technology that is making exhibitions more interactive than ever before and enriching the visitor experience to dizzy new heights.

There's no doubt that AI is having a huge impact, of course, but post COVID, museums have begun spending a higher amount of money on virtual experiences that make the guest experience more fun, while also more streamlined. There's been a big rise in the use of technology for accessibility, with many places integrating multimedia content to assist people with hearing difficulties, including audio content, videos and transcripts. AI has also played a huge role recently in speeding up the bulk of translation work for museums that offer their exhibitions in a number of different languages.

As well as this, cloud-based ticketing is on the rise to ensure that guests are having a seamless experience as soon as they walk through the door. A cloud-based ticketing system is an essential piece of museum software. It provides paperless tickets, contactless entry, and timed entry slots, allowing teams to focus on more important areas outside of visitor numbers and ticketing. While most large museums already have these solutions in place, smaller organisations are beginning to adopt this technology too.

But inevitably, we can't ignore the current impact of AR and AI. It's one of the biggest trends in the museum industry and it's not hard to see why. The immersive technology creates incredibly realistic experiences for guests, bringing exhibitions to life and placing them right at the centre. Long gone are the days of wandering around a museum and staring into dimly lit glass cages, now guests can come face to face with artefacts of the past.

Recently, in The National Museum of Natural History in Paris, France, 11 extinct species were brought to life in its 'Revivre' exhibition. Using augmented reality

glasses, the species were fully modelled in 3D and animated at their actual size. Guests found themselves transported into the daily lives and places of these animals from different continents, something that wouldn't have been achieved without AR technology.

Another recent example of AR leading the way in the museum industry, is the Cellphone: Unseen Connections exhibition at The Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, US. The exhibition explores what our smartphones really mean to us through more than 750 objects, multimedia installations and an interactive group chat.



The chat also involves numerous AI characters that form a novel charting the influence of the mobile phone on our modern lives. Guests can interact with these characters and join in the conversation, giving their opinion on the timely debate.

Additionally, the Cincinnati Black Music Walk of Fame, in the US, is now offering guests a new level of entertainment thanks to innovations made possible by AR. Immersive attraction company JRA, which is now owned by RWS Global, created an augmented reality band where visitors used green screen technology to either jam alongside Parliament Funkadelic legend William 'Bootsy' Collins or dance with 'Snap! I've Got the Power' songstress Penny Ford. As well as this, 'Beat Maker', an eight-person interactive drum machine invites visitors to beat to Blues, Hip-Hop, and Funk tunes. If they beat successfully, they are rewarded with a colour fountain light show.

QR codes at every Walk of Fame kiosk enable visitors to discover more information about the inductees, and they can bookmark the page to explore after their visit. Haptic vibration technology also allows those with hearing disabilities or deafness to enjoy the experience. This was all installed and developed by JRA.

Eve Sorin, Marketing Manager at JRA gave her opinion on the rise of AI: "With our efforts towards the continual development of captivating exhibit experiences that are fully immersive and saturated with value for visitors, we are enthralled by the current surge in AI integration. This transformative leap isn't just reshaping experiential delivery, it's also forging innovative avenues to elevate guest interactions with rich and personalised content.

"This is a big focus for us. Seamless technology integrations driven by AI is another one. The more our experiences can deliver meaningful stories for our visitors in a way that thoughtfully and strategically reaches them with immediacy, the better chance we have to forge stronger relationships between the visitor and a museum's content, artefacts, values, and mission. Our aim is to create a connection with the visitor - not just to an exhibit, but to aspects of themselves, to others, to technology and to their wider world.

"Our focus lies in delivering story and emotion in ways that meet guests where they are, where they learn, where they watch and where they scroll, taking techniques we uncover from the other aspects of our portfolio, such as theme parks, immersive experiences, brand destinations and children's attractions and infusing them into our museum work (and vice versa)."

Aside from AR, many museums are expanding their reach into immersive technology and with that comes a rise in the use of video screens, projection and haptics. Leaders in this field, Strong MDI have created the SEISMOS Interactive flooring system and Orion Optical Floor Tiles specifically for the museum market.

Seismos is a direct drive haptic floor system developed to stimulate an emotional response through vertical movement. The flooring system is designed to enhance a person's sensory experience. A lot of what we experience not only comes from what we hear and see, but also through what we feel and Seismos allows your whole body to feel the vibrations of a rocket taking off, a volcano erupting, or the footsteps of an elephant.

Orion Optical Floor Tiles allow the technical team to visually maintain a seamless transition within the immersive environment, minimising the need to recalibrate the media between the horizontal and vertical projection surfaces. The matte grey, low gain coating is inherent within the commercial grade flooring tile making it a durable projection surface. The optical floor tiles are engineered to withstand heavy foot traffic while maintaining excellent optical performance.

The tiles can be installed on any surface and can be combined with Seismos for the ultimate in optical performance. Geneviève Touchette Director of Marketing at Strong MDI said: "Immersive environments and virtual reality technology are big trends in museums now. They both provide a unique and engaging experience that goes beyond traditional forms of art. Immersive art allows the viewer to become an active participant in the artwork, rather than simply observing it from a distance. It is engaging rather than passive."





Picasso Quebec Exhibit

Alongside the visual and auditory technology, companies are stimulating the other senses used on a trip to the museum. Aroma Prime is a leading UK-based company in the scent market and has recently launched new Aroma Blocks that have been rolled out at various museums across the world. One exciting recent project was the creation of an ether scent for the Anaesthesia Heritage Centre in London, UK.

This is used in talks and tours and is provided via Aroma Prime's Aroma Cubes, which are small objects for sniffing. The scent was developed using descriptions provided by the customer, which were tested by a doctor who had personal experience using ether in the past.

As well as this, Aroma Prime recently provided seven scents for individual spaces on the Tall Ship Glenlee, a maritime museum in Glasgow, UK. The museum is onboard a restored Victorian Ship with recreated rooms to match how they would have originally looked. Using Aroma Prime's Vortex scent machines, the museum is diffusing smells such as carbolic soap, potatoes and dirty linen to help visitors understand what it might have been like to live on the ship.



Beat Maker



Corvette Museum Educational Gallery Activities

"AromaPrime was founded in the interests of making up-to-date scenting technology accessible to museums of all sizes and budgets," explained Liam Findlay, theme park and museum scenting specialist at Aroma Prime. "As part of this, we have been refining the means by which customers can control exactly when a scent is released and how strong it is."

"We take inspiration from innovators such as Charlotte Mikkelborg, who developed a backpack for the Mary Rose museum. This was designed to release scents at specific moments, based on visitors' locations in an educational AI game. The more a customer can control scents, the more they can harness their powers, and I foresee scent technology improving more and more in terms of how the scents can be controlled and integrated into interpretation. AromaPrime's newest machine, the Multiscent DMX, is an example of supplying for this demand – it can hold three scents at any one time and diffuse them separately or together, all controlled simply via DMX."

There's no doubt that museums have benefitted from a huge rise in digital technology post COVID. The desire for real world connections after consecutive lockdowns has levelled up the offering, with immersive technology and AR leading the way. From extinct species brought back to life to immersive exhibitions that play on all of the senses, museum technology is definitely one to keep an eye on as technology innovates further into the future.



IMS Museum

**WE HELP YOU
BUILD A LASER
TAG BUSINESS
WITHOUT THE GUNS**



ZTAG IS PERFECT FOR:

- Adventure Parks
- Camps
- Family Fun Centers
- Game Trucks
- Parks & Rec
- Schools
- Team Building and more

BENEFITS

- 01 - Reach a wider market with a gunless game.
- 02 - 3X more affordable than laser tag.
- 03 - Minimal space required





Extasy © Monsieur Sky

PRATER VIENNA

By Emma Davidson

Once an imperial hunting ground, Prater Vienna is one of the oldest and largest public parks in Austria. Dating back to 1766, where it was used as a public leisure centre, Prater Vienna is now home to the Wurstelprater amusement park, Prater museum, an exhibition centre and a planetarium, all of which are uniquely free to explore.

The land on which the park sits was donated by Austrian Emperor Josef II. He allowed restaurants to be erected in the area, and it wasn't long until the precursors to the Wurstelprater began to appear on the edge of the former hunting grounds. Coffee brewers and gingerbread makers set up camp, setting the tone for the merry-go-rounds, carousels and bowling alleys that would follow.

Later in the 1700s, the Emperor ordered the construction of a huge square in front of the Prater, which was named the Praterstern. This made Prater Vienna even more accessible from all directions and two years later, the adjacent Wurstelprater had extended beyond its original outlines. Among the buildings were inns, shooting galleries and a hut where mechanical birds could be admired, the beginnings of the exciting theme park that it is now known as.

Throughout the early 1800s, because of technological advancements, the entertainment offering at the Wurstelprater became more and more diverse. In the 1840s, Basilio Calafati, born in Trieste, built the first railroad carousel. In 1854 he extended it with the figure of the Great Chinese, which (in the form of a replica – the original was destroyed in the Second World War) still stands today as Calafati in Wurstelprater and has become a landmark, attracting tourists from across the world.

In 1873, the Prater was completely redesigned as it played host to the very first and only World Exhibition in Vienna. The redesign by Austrian architect Lothar Abel mainly affected Wurstelprater. Roads and paths were laid, gas lighting was installed, and numerous huts and undertakings were also demolished. During the redesign, Wurstelprater was given the name Volksprater, which is still the official name for Wurstelprater today.

Around 53,000 exhibitors presented their achievements and wares in an area that spanned 2.3 million sqm at the World Exhibition. It was intended to present Austria's new lease of life after the lost wars against France and Prussia and the exhibition also aimed to garner Vienna international fame and enter Prater into the entertainment industry.

Things changed for Prater Vienna at the start of the 20th century. The International City was built, a place where guests could journey through the colourful streets of Spain, Japan and Egypt, and a



Luftikus © Monsieur Sky

year later it would become the City of Flowers and then the Electric City. In 1904, cinemas started to open after advancements in video technology, and Prater Stadium followed in 1931, alongside one of the world's oldest ghost trains - the Geisterschloß.

Just as the park was welcoming more and more innovative attractions, World War 2 began and, at the beginning of April 1945, the Wurstelprater was largely destroyed by bombs and fires during the Battle of Vienna. Only 18 buildings and attractions remained largely untouched. After the end of the war, the City of Vienna dissolved all existing leases and the decision was made to rebuild the Wurstelprater.

In order to finance the reconstruction of Wurstelprater, donations were collected in 1946 under the motto "W W W - Wieder Wiener Wurstelprater", which translates to "Vienna Wurstelprater Again". On the Christian Holiday Pentecost in 1947, the Giant Ferris Wheel was operating once again, but it would take some time before it became as popular as it had been before World War II.

In the middle of the 20th century, the first pinball machines and gambling machines were installed in Wurstelprater. In 1964, the planetarium near the Giant Ferris Wheel was reopened after its predecessor had been destroyed in the war, too. In the 1970s, the first computer games came to Wurstelprater and modern hydraulics and pneumatics made the construction of new rides possible.

Celebrating its 150th anniversary this year, Wurstelprater has now transformed into a bustling theme park complete with over 250 attractions for all ages from 80 operators. Marina Rathgeb, Head of Visitor Services at Prater Vienna said: "We have a company called Funtime in the Prater which manufactures its attractions in Austria and supplies parks worldwide.



Prater Turm (Funtime) © Monsieur Sky

Guests will also find a few rides from Funtime in the Prater. Furthermore, many well-known manufacturers are represented in the park, including Huss Park Attractions and Mack Rides."

Located in the beating heart of Vienna, Prater - the public park in which Wurstelprater sits - is free to explore 24 hours a day 365 days a year, but the attractions at the theme park run from 15 March - 31 October and then again from 1 November – 14 March.

To celebrate the park's huge anniversary this year, Prater Vienna is opening a new 104ft-tall, 328ft-wide rotunda. The structure will exhibit large-scale panoramic works



Wintermarkt am Riesenradplatz © Julius Silver



Boomerang © Monsieur Sky

of art and is intended to echo the rotunda built for the World Fair, which was the largest domed structure in the world when it was erected in 1873. The original was destroyed by fire in 1937.

As well as this, the city of Vienna is currently hosting an entire year of exhibitions and events, which are ongoing until December when the park's Wien Museum will open after a huge renovation and expansion, which has been ongoing since 2019. Some of the most notable exhibitions include Women at Work at Vienna Museum of Technology and 1873 Vienna World's Fair Revisited, which journeys through the iconic events of Vienna's celebration of the biggest names in culture and industry.

Visitors heading to Vienna this year can also download the 1873 World's Fair Guide. The brochure documents the fair's legacy, touching on several landmarks that opened in the year of the exhibition, including some of the city's most loved coffee houses, the Hochstrahlbrunnen fountain and the opulent Hotel Imperial, which was opened ahead of the exhibition to house tourists that flocked to the famous fair.

Although entry to the public park is free, each ride in Prater must be paid for separately and prices range from €3.50 to €15. Across its history, Wurstelprater has welcomed everything from the traditional Ferris Wheel to roller coasters and dodgems, but as it stands, the 250 attractions and rides offer something for all of the family.

Take the iconic Prater Turm, a 117-metre-high carousel that held the title for the highest chain carousel in the world until it was beaten in 2013. The ride gives an incredible view across the whole of Vienna and is one of the park's most popular attractions. The historic Wiener Riesenrad (Vienna's Giant Ferris Wheel) is also a famous landmark and popular tourist spot, as it has stood at Prater Vienna since the late 1800s.

The Giant Ferris Wheel was ceremoniously opened to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the throne of Emperor Franz Josef I and it was considered to be one of the most

important and largest attractions in the world. It was originally planned to only stand for a few years, but it became incredibly successful, and, in its first year of operation, the Giant Ferris Wheel had welcomed more than 200,000 passengers.

During World War II, the Giant Ferris Wheel was almost completely destroyed. After reconstruction, it was equipped with only 15 carriages because of uncertainty around its stability after the attacks. To this day, the Giant Ferris Wheel is privately owned.

Alongside the wheel, Wurstelprater is home to several other fan favourites including the Black Mamba. This thrilling ride travels at 80km/h with unexpected twists and turns due to its unique snake-like design that is mounted on three axes. It lasts for approximately three minutes, and up to eight brave visitors can ride at the same time.

Another highlight for adrenaline junkies is the high-speed roller coaster Boomerang. This ride passes its entire route in both directions, with the key feature being the direction in which passengers are sitting. First, they sit in the driving direction and afterwards they drive the route backwards to feel some additional adrenaline surges. The track of Boomerang runs between two 37-metre-high towers, which are connected by a double loop. Each car has two rows with two seats side by side and the maximum speed exceeds 85 km/h. The trip with this vehicle takes roughly two minutes.

Something for younger family members, the Wildalpenbahn is the perfect family fun ride for the warmer weather. The round boats, which can accommodate up to nine guests, are elevated in a tower at an altitude of around 30-metres. After reaching the top of the tower the rapid descent begins in a wide water channel whilst the boats rotate as they slide downhill. At the end of the downswing riders are slowed down by deeper water. Only the lucky ones will be spared by a splash and stay dry, but if passengers are soaked, they are dried by a large body dryer at the Wildalpenbahn

exit. The cruise takes around three minutes and is suitable for children from four years of age.

Additionally, Wurstelprater is also home to Vienna's Madame Tussauds. The well-known waxwork museum is positioned opposite the Giant Ferris Wheel and there are approximately 65 figures exhibited across three floors covering 2,000sqm. Among the wax figures guests will find more than 25 Austrian personalities including Sigmund Freud, Maria Theresia and Ludwig van Beethoven.

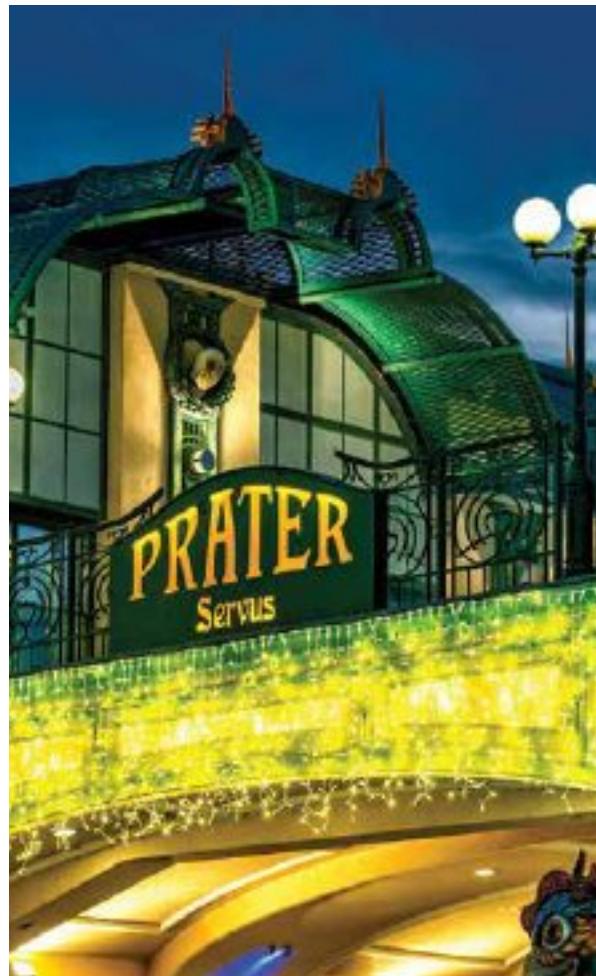
If guests are in need of a hearty meal during their visit to Wurstelprater, the Schweizerhaus is one of the most popular places to refuel. "We have numerous offers at our park. Everything is included, from adventure gastronomy such as the Rollercoaster Restaurant to sausage stands and typical, traditional Viennese cuisine. However, the most famous restaurant in our park is the Schweizerhaus. The Original Schweizerhaus Stelze served with a freshly tapped Budweiser beer is a must for almost every Prater visitor," explained Marina. The restaurant is loved for its vast menu of food and excellent selection of beers as well as its traditional decorations. It offers food and drink in a vast garden and a large indoor area, where at least 3,000 visitors can sit at once.

Joining Schweizerhaus are 51 other restaurants and bars that span across Prater Vienna. Guests can enjoy Caribbean food at Santo, sweets and ice cream at Eisvogel Eissalon, Eisliebe and Süsses Paradies, Austrian delicacies at Gösser Eck, pizza at L'osteria and all-day breakfasts at Brenner. Visitors can also spend the evenings at dance bars and clubs at Prater Vienna, including the Prater Dome. The club offers a stylish night out with DJs spanning house, disco, latin, and soul and 360° video visuals. In addition to the main club, there are also separate lounges.

Pratersauna is another popular late-night venue. Originally a real sauna, in 2009 the Pratersauna was converted into a club and has been one of the most sought-after places in Vienna ever since. DJs offer a mix of house, electro, and techno with beach flair as the club is also home to a pool.

Across the year, Prater Vienna welcomes a number of large-scale events, most notably the huge winter market. Taking place this year from 18 November 2023 until 7 January 2024, the 'Winter Market on the Riesenradplatz' in the Prater offers an exciting entertainment program throughout the cold season. Food pop-ups, attractions and live music are what attract guests to the magical winter world, which has been captivating visitors now for 13 years.

Live concerts by local artists take place every Wednesday to Sunday during the market's run and everything from gospel to pop and soul is included. Visitors can ride on the winter train, enjoy high-altitude flights on the chain carousel, visit the autodrome, and enjoy hot drinks and culinary delights from the huge range of traders. The ideal location for numerous other high capacity events, throughout the year Prater Vienna hosts flea markets and the Kaiser Weisn, too, Vienna's largest Oktoberfest celebration. Running from 21 September – 8 October, visitors to the Kaiser Wiesn can enjoy music, markets featuring locally made handicrafts and



Wintermarkt am Riesenradplatz © Julius Silver

authentic food from across the region. Kaiser Weisn is completely free to attend. As well as this, hundreds celebrate St Patrick's Day, New Year's Eve, Halloween and more at Prater Vienna.

Although it is not an Austrian holiday, Halloween has become popular across Vienna and Prater is the perfect place to spend it. Every year on October 31, zombies, mummies, vampires, and other creepy creatures take over the park and visitors can hear some scary legends from professional storytellers, try on some frightening make-up, take part in the Halloween parade, and watch the Burning Calafati Fire Show.

Vienna's biggest Halloween party attracts hundreds of witches, living dead, vampires and ghouls, and all visitors can enjoy free admission. There is a zombie walk, followed by The Halloween Parade with colourful floats and costumes, and the best-dressed guests also win special prizes.

Prater Vienna is one of Vienna's biggest tourist attractions. Since the late 1700s, people have been flocking to the park for entertainment, and its legacy looks like it will be carried on for years to come. From over 250 attractions at the Wurstelprater, to clubs, bars, restaurants and the huge Winter Market, Prater Vienna has set the bar for other parks to follow. It's about providing the next level entertainment for guests and a full day of fun for all of the family. Officially celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2023, Prater Vienna will no doubt continue to impress theme park fans as it further adds to its offering in the future.

SHAPING SAFE WORKPLACES FOR ALL

By Carl Hagemann, General Manager, ADIPS

The amusements industry has made progress in recent times in accommodating neurodivergent visitors with conditions such as Autism and ADHD. We're seeing sensory rooms, access passes to skip long queues, the availability of ear defenders, and more clarity in communications about how to get around destinations, to name just a few of the initiatives. Theme parks can be a sensory feast for some of us, but overwhelming for others, and the industry has woken up to this.

What isn't in the public eye quite so much is the relationship between neurodiversity and safety at parks, for both visitors and workers. Those involved in keeping people safe at work and in public places have also been on a journey in recent years, and there is more we can do to manage the safety risks associated with neurodiversity.

Across sectors, organisations continue to tailor their approach to safety from a neurotypical perspective. It is why the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH), has a focus on it this year. 'Diversity – including neurodiversity specifically – is a huge opportunity for all of us,' said IOSH President Lawrence Webb recently.

So, what are the challenges of managing safety for neurodivergent workers?

- **Sensory sensitivity** - neurodivergent workers can be particularly sensitive to stimuli such as lights and sounds. These can distract and make it difficult for workers to focus on following safety policies and procedures.
- **Interpersonal skills** - building and maintaining relationships with co-workers can be difficult for neurodivergent people. Relationships are a central part of a strong safety culture.
- **Communication** - people with conditions such as autism can find understanding verbal and non-verbal cues problematic, which leads to crossed wires and miscommunication. This is a serious issue when we're talking about misinterpretation of safety signals, for example.
- **Mental wellbeing** - your neurodivergent employees may become anxious and stressed at work because of the challenges, so their wellbeing could suffer.

To address these challenges we must create inclusive, supportive work environments that consider their needs. There are a number of things we can do:

- **Flexible work schedules** - neurodivergent workers may well have parts of the day when they are most effective. This is easier to introduce for some roles



Carl Hagemann, General Manager, ADIPS.

than others, but we can be creative in how we flex for these employees.

- **Inclusive communications** - those who think in different ways will process information differently, so adjusting your comms on park safety to be clearer, more succinct and to the point will often help.
- **Quiet rooms** - it is easy for neurodivergent people to become over-stimulated and stressed, which can affect their ability to follow safety protocols. Providing areas of calm gives an opportunity to rest for a few minutes, which will help keep their focus.
- **Team building** - safety needs to be embedded in your work culture, and culture relies on strong relationships and engagement. Team building activities that consider the needs of neurodivergent workers strengthen those connections and this can support a healthy culture.
- **Training and skills** - tailoring safety training, mentoring and coaching for your neurodivergent workers is essential. Training is very much part of how an organisation shapes a safe work culture, and this needs to be inclusive and accessible.

This is not an exhaustive list but it does give an idea of the measures we can take to ensure our workplaces are safe and healthy. Theme parks are ahead of the game in comparison to some industries on accommodating neurodivergent customers, and they can lead the way in shaping places of work to get the best from those who create the magic, however they think.



Valhalla Blackpool Pleasure Beach

By David Whitworth

The Nordic journey to the climatic Valhalla is once again awaiting hearty souls.

The much beloved dark ride of Valhalla at Blackpool Pleasure Beach is transporting guests to a parallel Nordic universe full of fire, frenzy, and fun in this second coming for the UK's wettest attraction.

The waterborne ride in its new incarnation still retains the famous tagline reminding riders "you will get wet; you may get soaked", however, the ride has undergone a cosmetic overhaul over the past four years since its closure at the end of the 2019 season.

A mixture of the pandemic and supply issues meant that park guests had to be a little bit more patient with the attraction reopening, but reopened it has from 10 May to excite and delight once more.

The enhanced experience consists of six minutes of high-speed action as guests take the plunge on board one of 12 boats, each carrying eight riders. Valhalla has a capacity of 2,000 riders per hour and what lies ahead is a breathtaking multi-sensory experience taking in 16 different scenes with elements including fire, water, winds, and snow, braving polar opposite temperatures of -20°C and highs of more than 43°C. Riders take a half-mile journey on-board an authentic Viking longboat destined for Valhalla.

Guided by a brave Viking named Ivàr, guests encounter the spirit of Odin and pass into the afterlife to try to make it to Valhalla, a destination based on Norse mythology, which is the promised land of the afterlife for Viking warriors.

Its ride specifications include drops of 62ft (19-metres) with a maximum vertical angle of 70°. Riders can reach speeds of 43mph (70 km/h), and cover a distance of 2,000ft (610-metres).

Valhalla has been acknowledged, or best put, showered, with awards during its time in operation - namely "Best Water Ride in The World" in the annual Golden Ticket Awards.

The aquatic attraction is an impressive structure, which encompasses the ride show, animations, and effects. The creations were designed by a number of ride manufacturers from around the UK, France, and the US, with Intamin providing the water transit system. The ride is built inside an 80ft-tall (24-metre) structure and its entrance is a vast design of an artificial rock face featuring a large waterfall that flows down the ride building facade, triggering an enormous 12,000 gallons of water per minute.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach has invested a further £4m into the reimagining of Valhalla following its initial £15m

investment when it opened and the award-winning water attraction is worth the wait, as Amanda Thompson OBE, CEO Blackpool Pleasure Beach, pointed out at the rides reopening in May: "We know how long fans have been waiting for us to announce the reopening of Valhalla and we're confident they won't be disappointed with our reimaging of one of the country's best-loved rides. The team has been hard at work behind the scenes, and we can't wait to have the famous Valhalla waterfall back on in the park once more. The new ride is absolutely sensational and will definitely leave riders wanting more."

Valhalla initially opened for technical rehearsals on 12 April meaning the ride operated intermittently throughout the day. Some elements of the attraction were not fully functioning, which is a concept more widely utilised in the US.

Once opened, fans of Valhalla got their fill once more of its incredible feat of engineering. There is much nostalgia about a ride that was first opened at the turn of the millennium on 14 June 2000. And the importance to retain the nostalgia while upgrading the ride for modern day purposes is a fact not lost on Thompson: "Those who remember the original ride may recognise some of its best-loved features, but this reimaging of Valhalla offers a totally new immersive experience that will leave riders eager to return!"

And once the ride was fully up and running, Thompson spoke at length about Valhalla in an exclusive insight with InterPark.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE REIMAGINED VALHALLA?

"Absolutely breathtakingly amazing; and you still get very very wet!"





WHAT ARE THE LATEST EFFECTS THAT RIDERS CAN EXPECT?

"There are lots of exciting features, the fire room is still amazing with some bigger effects there but the rest we will leave to the rider to discover!"

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES WITH THIS PROJECT?

"The main reason for the reimagining was that we have made Valhalla more sustainable and that was very important to us. It was so costly to run with all the gas and other products. That was part of the reason why it took longer for the ride to be delivered, such as producing a system to purify the water better and loading the boats in a different way. Valhalla has well and truly been given the reimagining it deserves, now boasting some exciting new features and impressive sustainability credentials to help ensure the ride is more environmentally friendly - without compromising on the sense of adventure for which it's been known for many years.

"The main thing for me is that it runs, and it is operational, and we do not have as much downtime with the ride. That is the most beneficial for me of all the reimagining. The pandemic also caused our operations to be halted during that period and then the knock-on effect was the difficulty in gaining the spare parts we needed - some of them took six months - meaning we suffered further delays. But we went full steam ahead the best we could, and the main thing now is the ride is open and everyone is absolutely loving it. People are racing towards its entrance to get on-board whether it be the first trip of the day or the last. We also have a new merchandise offering for Valhalla, so it has given the ride a new lease of life.

"Like with all our rides there are challenges due to the compactness of the park but with the evolution of engineering, tracks can be bent and interwoven, which we have successfully achieved here at the Pleasure Beach. If you need to do it, you can do it."

INTAMIN BUILT VALHALLA BACK IN 2000. HOW MUCH OF A ROLE DID THE MANUFACTURER PLAY IN THE UPGRADES OF THE RIDE?

"They were integral to the upgrades as we had to remain with their services due to the original build. The changes we have made had to come from there but also, I like to keep things organised for the records when dealing with manufacturers and it helps safety wise."

THERE IS A NEW SOUNDTRACK THAT ACCOMPANIES VALHALLA, TELL ME MORE?

"The new soundtrack has been created by The Notable Stranger and it is really exciting. You can listen to it on Spotify and Apple music. "The author of the piece is Glenn Robertson who wrote the score to Icon and the Big One and we worked together on the Hot Ice music. The original theme music of 'Song of The Elders' can still be heard in the dryers area at the end of the ride so people who are nostalgic can still hear that."

HAVE YOU RIDDEN THE RIDE?

"Yes, of course! It was wet! You get soaking wet!"

WHAT WAS THE ORIGIN OF THE RIDE AND HOW DID ITS CONCEPT COME ABOUT?

"My father was very fond of Viking history. Both my sister and my brother are married to two Norwegians so with all the links, it gave my father a chance to visit the region and further his passion. He was off travelling, finding out what he could about the Nordic culture and it came from there."

CAN YOU SHARE DETAILS ABOUT FUTURE PROJECTS?

"Watch this space for whatever else gets reimagined!"

InterPark also canvassed opinions from Adam Slevin, Director of Creative, Design & Experience Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

CAN YOU EXPLAIN YOUR ROLE ON THE VALHALLA PROJECT?

"As the Creative Director, I was tasked with shaping the creative and audio-visual aspects of the reimagined ride, which started back on Boxing Day, 2019. From there, I got to work on the reimagining of Valhalla. I started my role last January, but I have been working with the Pleasure Beach for the past six years."

WHAT WAS THE TRICKIEST PART OF THE RIDE REIMAGINATION?

"Most elements of the ride's upgrade was tricky when you have to translate something from paper to reality. Features such as running huge fire effects in a ride that is water based and across multi levels with timings on water features using water containments means there are naturally a lot of moving parts. A lot of disciplines that have to happen at the same time meant the logistics of bringing it all together was challenging. Plus, the aspect of testing all the features was a long process. It was frustrating as we wanted to get Valhalla green-lit as soon as possible but now it is open we hope that guests recognise the work they can both see and not see - there were many areas we had to update for it to be fit for modern riding and aid its longevity.

"We have worked so hard to find the perfect balance between maintaining nostalgia, giving the ride some much-needed TLC, and adding in a few surprises for fans. Valhalla will test even the most confident roller coaster rider's limits, with plummeting temperatures, fiery furnaces, and torrents of water."

CAN YOU TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE IMPROVED SUSTAINABILITY ASPECT OF VALHALLA?

"It was in our minds from the get-go for Valhalla to be more sustainable such as using fire effects with more steam and incorporating a completely new lighting and sound system throughout the ride. For instance, if a boat is in a certain area, the lights and sounds can be triggered to work in that specific place and do not need to be on in other areas. The ride is completely LED orientated now plus we were mindful to use the right props and material in-house. We are as sustainable as we can be with a dark ride the size of Valhalla.

GOING FORWARD, HOW IMPORTANT IS THE SUSTAINABILITY ASPECT FOR FUTURE PLEASURE BEACH PROJECTS?

"It is absolutely a priority for us; we are increasingly aware of the responsibility to be sustainable, such as working with local contractors and switching to LED. It is a constant question for the park asking are we sustainable in every step we take and make sure we tick that box at every stage. The world is moving towards that as it absolutely should."

RETURNING TO VALHALLA, TELL US ABOUT THE DIFFERENCES IN TECHNOLOGY BETWEEN WHEN IT OPENED IN 2000 AND NOW?

"As the original project was being worked on in 1998 and 1999, a lot has changed in the world in terms of the materials being developed now to 25 years ago. A lot of the products we use now simply were not available back then, especially the environment that Valhalla is in, surrounded by water, heat and salt air from the Irish Sea - so finding products for Valhalla has been problematic. The sound system is much more sophisticated as we have more control over where and when an audio plays and at what level. The number of sensors around



the ride means that it is easier to trigger a lighting, sound, or smoke effect easier now and trigger them from one area."

HOW LONG IS THE RIDE NOW?

"It is roughly the same, around six minutes, making it a very long ride. When I am in the park, I see guests pleasantly surprised by the length of the ride and the scale it is. It is a huge steel arena when you think about it, full of services, cables, and walkable areas for staff, making for a huge labyrinth of corridors and a hotbed of activity. The maintenance checks on Valhalla are rigorous in which every day needs attention, as do all our rides.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE FEEDBACK FROM GUESTS?

"The feedback has been really good ever since we commenced technical rehearsals and tweaking elements from there. I see a lot of smiles, laughter and chatting about one's experience which is lovely to see. We are absolutely thrilled with that."

ARE THERE ANY OTHER ELEMENTS TO COME?

"What you see now is the finished article, but guests should keep their eyes peeled for next season and the season after for future elements being added - the ride has certainly been a tricky secret to keep. But I am really fortunate that my team at the Pleasure Beach Studio of artists and model makers are highly skilled. In the winter we give attention to our dark rides to retouch them, and we will definitely be doing that this winter. Hopefully, people will notice new things going into next season."

HOW WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE RIDING VALHALLA?

"From a guest's point of view, fantastic. I had forgotten how thrilling the drops are! It really caught me by surprise. They seem three times as big when you are on it than when seen with all the lights on! It was quite emotional the first time I went round on the boat again after such a long time as it marked the end of COVID-19 in a way. We got there in spite of the pandemic."

HOW WAS THE PROCESS OF CREATING THE NEW SOUNDTRACK?

"With the reimagining of a ride 20 years later, with a slightly different story we wanted a new soundtrack. We worked with Glenn Robertson and walked him through the journey from beginning to end. Together we put our vision in terms of the instruments and finding the right tone for the concept towards each scene of the ride. We heightened the tension and drama and after many brainstorming sessions we ended up with a superb soundtrack which we are thrilled with."

HOW MUCH DOES THIS PROJECT MEAN TO YOU?

"As a kid, it was Blackpool Pleasure Beach that kickstarted my passion for the theme park industry. My Dad used to bring me up from London where I grew up to enjoy the Pleasure Beach, so it feels like a wonderful journey for me to be here in a professional capacity and fully appreciate my work. I have learnt the value of learning the craft of the industry and gaining insight from the wonderful and talented people I have around me. I hope with my team we inspire future generations to this fascinating industry."





MOHAMED ABDALLA AL ZAABI

InterPark Editor, Beth Whitaker sits down with Mohamed Abdalla Al Zaabi, Group CEO at Miral to find out what makes the MENA attractions market so special.



Ferrari World Abu Dhabi

HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE ATTRACTIONS INDUSTRY?

Following my role as Director of Strategic Investment at Aldar Properties PJSC, I joined Miral as Group CEO in 2015. My decision to join Miral was driven by my passion for creating experiences that bring people together. I recognised that Miral had a unique opportunity to position itself as the region's leading creator of immersive destinations and experiences, and I wanted to contribute to making this vision a reality.

In my capacity as Group CEO, I have been responsible for the strategic vision in driving Miral's expansion and establishing its reputation across the region, as well as overseeing the company's expanding portfolio of assets on Yas Island and in Abu Dhabi. This involves leading a team of professionals to deliver world-class attractions and experiences that not only cater to diverse audiences and bring smiles to peoples' faces, but also contribute to Abu Dhabi's economic diversification and growth of the Emirate.

TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT MOHAMED...

Well.. The first roller coaster I ever went on was the Star Wars ride at Disneyland Paris in 1999. The thrilling twists, turns, and drops filled me with a sense of excitement and adventure that I still reminisce about till date!

As well as this, the most interesting place I have ever been to is the Palace of Versailles in France. Its rich historical background and distinctive architectural style left me fascinated.

And... If I could change one thing about the world, it would be to guarantee that every individual on the planet has access to safe, clean water, and sufficient, nutritious food.

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR MIRAL 'BEST BITS' SO FAR?

I am incredibly proud of the accomplishments that my team and I have achieved through our vision of developing an integrated entertainment and leisure destination that leaves a lasting impression on our guests of all ages. I have been part of Miral's evolution since its inception, starting with record-breaking theme parks such as Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Waterworld Abu Dhabi and continuing to add iconic developments like Etihad Arena, Hilton Abu Dhabi Yas Island, and Yas Bay. Our goal has always been to deliver unique and inspirational experiences that go beyond mere entertainment.

To me, the most rewarding part of this journey has been bringing smiles to people's faces. As a team, we remain committed to developing world-class attractions and experiences that create unforgettable moments and spark joy, not only on Yas Island but also in Abu Dhabi. Over the years, we have brought some of the world's most recognisable leisure and entertainment brands to the region, from launching the world's fastest rollercoaster at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi to opening the largest-ever indoor theme park at Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi.

At Miral, we are always on the move, working towards the next big attraction. Recently, we announced that we will open a Harry Potter-themed land, which will bring something totally unique to Abu Dhabi. As a team, we continue to ask ourselves, "what's next?" because we know that the possibilities for creating unforgettable experiences are endless.

WHAT MAKES THE MENA ATTRACTIONS INDUSTRY SPECIAL?

The region is experiencing particularly fast growth across the attractions industry. As we continue to open



Yas Island

new theme parks and attractions every year, I am proud to say that the region is becoming a major player in the global attractions industry. The amount of investment that has been made is incredible, with several mega-projects in the pipeline.

Research from IAPPA indicated that visitors in the UAE are expected to spend US\$609m by the end of 2023 within the sector, up from \$266m only four years ago. These figures are a testament to the region's appeal and the hard work put in by those who have contributed to its growth.

The industry is so active because, on a macro-economic level, the UAE and Abu Dhabi are recognised as world-class travel destinations that have built a thriving tourism sector. This growth has been driven by the diversity of the offering, which constantly evolves with record-breaking launches, positive visitor sentiment, and a substantial appetite for leisure and domestic tourism from residents.

In terms of what is driving people to Abu Dhabi, we believe this is due to the diversity of the tourism proposition, coupled with new attractions, enhanced experiences and excellent safety measures. And this is where Miral plays a vital role. Abu Dhabi also has world-class infrastructure and is viewed as one of the safest cities in the world, which puts it in a prime position to welcome increasing numbers of tourists and consequently continues to attract major investment.



Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi

On a micro-economic level, Miral, as a leading creator of immersive destinations and experiences in the country, over the past 11 years has been driving much of this sector growth, across Abu Dhabi and on Yas Island. We have transformed the leisure and entertainment experience in Abu Dhabi by designing, creating, developing, operating, and managing immersive destinations and experiences that attract visitors from around the world. Some of these include CLYMB Abu Dhabi, which houses the world's tallest indoor artificial climbing wall and the world's largest flight chamber, Qasr Al Watan, a cultural landmark housed within the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi, and Yas Waterfront, encompassing the Etihad Arena, which hosts international events from concerts, sports tournaments, musicals, live entertainment, and cultural celebrations, as well as the Hilton hotel on Yas Waterfront.

We have also enjoyed a long-standing partnership with Warner Bros. and in 2018, we opened the world's largest indoor theme park, Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi. Then we moved to our next big thing with Warner Bros. and introduced the world's first-ever Warner Bros. themed hotel, a hospitality icon attracting people from all over the world.

HOW HAVE YOU SEEN ATTRACTION GUESTS CHANGE?

We have witnessed over the last few years how technology has revolutionised the entire customer experience. We started introducing new digital activations across our entire ecosystem to produce more personalised, interactive and frictionless services.

Data plays a vital role in the tourism, leisure, and entertainment industry. I have seen firsthand the value of using analytics and technology to better understand our guests' preferences. Building a personalised experience starts long before they even book their stay or arrive at the destination. It is important to engage with guests throughout their entire journey to understand their needs and tailor their experience accordingly.

By embedding data into our business, we can better engage with our guests, improve productivity, and drive efficiency. This not only ensures we stay ahead of the curve, but also provides unique and unforgettable experiences for our guests that will keep them coming back for more.

We are using a combination of first-party data, AI, machine-learning and data analytics that enhance and enable hyper-personalised and unique experiences for our guests. In 2020, we launched our \$10m Decision Analytics Strategy, the Noor Initiative, to enhance the company's investment in predictive data analytics, and integrate innovation across our operations, which in turn will bolster Abu Dhabi's position as a data-driven capital.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT WORKING IN THE ATTRACTIONS SECTOR?

In my opinion, the core essence of the attractions industry is to craft experiences



SeaWorld Yas Island, Abu Dhabi - One Ocean

that stay with people for a lifetime, regardless of their age or background. It's a sector that thrives on innovation and creativity, where we constantly strive to surpass our own limits and push boundaries.

I am proud to lead a team that shares the same passion for creating unique and remarkable experiences. We take pride in developing world-class attractions that not only entertain but also educate and inspire all those who visit. It's a fulfilling feeling knowing that our work impacts people's lives in such positive ways, whether we're designing the world's fastest rollercoaster or building immersive museums.

All in all, being a part of the attractions industry is a dream come true for me. It's an industry that's all about creating happiness, and I feel incredibly lucky to be a part of it.

WHAT CAN VISITORS EXPECT AT RECENTLY LAUNCHED SEAWORLD YAS ISLAND, ABU DHABI?

A collaboration between Miral and SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, the next-generation marine life theme park provides residents and tourists with a myriad of engaging and immersive family-friendly experiences. These include up-close animal encounters, state-of-the-art aquariums, dynamic animal habitats, thrilling rides, interactive educational experiences, inspiring entertainment as well as unmatched dining and shopping experiences. Guests from around the world will have the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and appreciation of marine life, while being educated and inspired.

The park's eight realms can be explored across five indoor levels, covering an area of approximately 183,000m². Guests will begin their experience at SeaWorld Abu Dhabi by entering the Abu Dhabi Ocean realm, where they will learn more about the UAE's long connection to the ocean. Abu Dhabi Ocean will also allow guests to experience up-close encounters with animals native to the emirate and wider region. Acting as the portal to the rest of the marine life theme park, guests will then enter the One Ocean realm, which will

transport them to the remaining six immersive realms, bringing them closer to the wonders of the ocean. Among its many highlights, SeaWorld Abu Dhabi's Endless Ocean realm is home to the world's largest and most expansive multi-species aquarium, containing over 25 million litres of water and provides a dynamic habitat to 68,000 marine animals, including sharks, schools of fish, manta rays, and sea turtles.

Adjacent to SeaWorld Abu Dhabi is Yas SeaWorld Research & Rescue, the first-of-its-kind dedicated marine research, rescue, rehabilitation, and return centre in the region. This centre, which opened in March 2023, serves as an advanced marine science knowledge hub and a key contributor to marine life conservation in the UAE and the wider region.

WHAT'S NEXT AT MIRAL?

I believe that introducing more digital enhancements is essential to meet the high customer experience expectations of consumers of all ages. Looking ahead, we will increase our investment in digitisation and expand our strategies with a renewed focus on global tourism, which we have already begun by expanding outside of the UAE and managing the operations of Saraya Aqaba Waterpark in Jordan through our subsidiary, Miral Experiences. Guided by our ambition to be a customer-centric, data-driven, progressive, and efficient organisation, Miral's strategy for the next five years will be fuelled by its focus on continuing to grow and develop Yas Island as a successful destination. Additionally, we will deliver new leisure and entertainment destinations and ventures that generate sustainable value while contributing to the diversification of Abu Dhabi's economy.

We are also committed to investing in sustainable solutions by integrating renewable energy components within our future developments. I believe that using green practices is the way forward, and Miral is committed to supporting the UAE's larger net-zero strategies by harnessing the most efficient, innovative, and sustainable systems across our developments.



WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR SEASON PASSES?

By: Dennis Speigel

Season passes have been a cornerstone in the leisure industry for decades, but with today's more complex programs, are they still worth the effort?

The idea originated in the 1950s and 1960s when amusement parks started offering multi-visit options and unlimited entry tickets for a set limited period to encourage repeat visits and build guest loyalty. It was a cost-effective option for guests to be able to enjoy the park's attractions and entertainment on a more frequent basis.

In 1982, Walt Disney introduced the concept of a formal annual passport program at Disneyland in California and at Walt Disney World in Florida. The original passport, the 'A' Pass, allowed guests to pay a fixed fee for unlimited admission to the park for a year. At the time of its debut, an adult annual pass was US\$65 to Disneyland and US\$100 to the Magic Kingdom and EPCOT. Today, Walt Disney World annual passes range from US\$400 to US\$1,40, a substantial increase from their debut.

As the industry grew and competition increased, parks started offering season passes with additional perks and benefits, such as discounts on merchandise, food, and special events. This not only incentivised guests to visit more often and to exhibit loyalty to the brand, but it also gave parks a consistent stream of revenue. It was considered a win-win and season pass programs had found their footing in theme parks.

Despite temporary suspensions due to COVID-19, season pass programs remain prevalent, although their complexities have changed dramatically because of tiered discounting levels and premium packages from which to choose. Understanding the benefits of these multi-tiers can be confusing to the guests, and have proven to be such. Other factors that make season pass programs more complex today are numerous add-ons and upgrade options (such as preferred parking, skip-the-line access, or dining discounts), black-out dates and restrictors, limited-time offers, online management requirements, confusing fine print and terms, continual

and overwhelming updates, and even the expiration and renewal processes. Diamond Pass, Gold Pass, Platinum Pass, Bronze Pass, Silver Pass, Elite Pass, Plus Pass... The options are daunting.

These complexities challenge both guests and park operators, necessitating clear communication, user-friendly options, and continual updates. Amid these changes, the question arises: are season pass programs still worth the effort? The answer is yes, but programs need a facelift to accommodate the maturity of our industry. The potential impact of not having season pass programs can be significant and far-reaching. Without the revenue stability and guest loyalty they bring, operators would face several challenges. Here are a few.

1. Early inconsistent revenue streams. These programs provide a reliable and, in most cases, a predictable source of revenue throughout the operating season. This is especially true for much-needed revenues in advance of the season, through offering early bird specials and pre-season promotions.
2. Increased dependence on daily ticket sales. This can lead to greater pressure on marketing and promotional efforts to attract new visitors often, thus making it hard to sustain visitor numbers during off-peak periods.
3. A decline in guest loyalty. Without these programs to create a sense of loyalty, park operators risk losing that sense of community and commitment. As we have recently seen announced in quarterly reports, this can result in lower visitation and decreased guest spending levels.
4. A lower value in terms of attractiveness. Without these exclusive benefits and perks, the park's value proposition may become less attractive to potential visitors.
5. Loss of data-driven marketing opportunities. These programs provide valuable data insights into behaviors, preferences, and spending habits, all critical components to understanding guests and creating effective marketing strategies.

6. Decrease in competitive edge. Not having robust season pass programs could decrease the park's competitive advantage, which could lead directly to a loss of market share.

Not having season pass programs can therefore have dramatic impacts on a park's financial health. In the USA, theme parks, season pass attendance is significant, with season pass holders representing upwards of 50% of the annual attendance. This means that parks must focus on new events, new attractions, enhanced food options, and more to cater to these frequent visitors.

Around the globe, theme parks are in a phase of pricing innovation and experimentation, particularly concerning these passholder programs. As the industry responds to shifting consumer preferences and embraces the latest technological advancements, the evolution of these pass programs is set to continue forging ahead. With the frequently bewildering and complex consumer choices, the question lingers... What does the future hold for these types of pass programs? What can parks do to make them even more attractive and beneficial to those who are considering shelling out hard-earned money for these programs?

- More personalisation, with benefits and perks tailored to individual preferences.
- Greater incorporation with mobile apps and wearable devices.
- Integration with augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR), which would allow for more immersive digital content.
- Further embracing of dynamic pricing for season passes, with costs varying based on factors like demand, park capacity, or seasonal peaks.
- Greater use of advanced subscription models, with many parks already taking this approach by giving passholders the option to make
- Heightened benefits and even greater discounts.
- For theme park resorts, combination of season passes with accommodation packages to offer a seamless experience.

These examples merely scratch the surface of how season pass programs can continue to innovate. What remains certain is that these programs will remain a pivotal part of a park's strategy to cultivate loyalty and maintain consistent revenue streams. Operators must make sure that prospective passholders understand not only the intricacies of these programs, but more critically, how their purchasing decisions can best serve their families. This will require straightforward programs that are easy to understand, enabling purchasers to make well-informed decisions.

Season passes can continue to be a significant contributor to a theme park or attraction and to new and returning guests. Properly managed, these programs are still a viable ticket sector, which unquestionably makes them worth continuing to manage.

I for one believe many operators have exceeded an acceptable level of season pass attendance as an aggregate part of their total annual attendance. I believe Dynamic Pricing is our industry's next important ticketing approach to implement to provide growth both at the attendance and revenue lines.

About ITPS

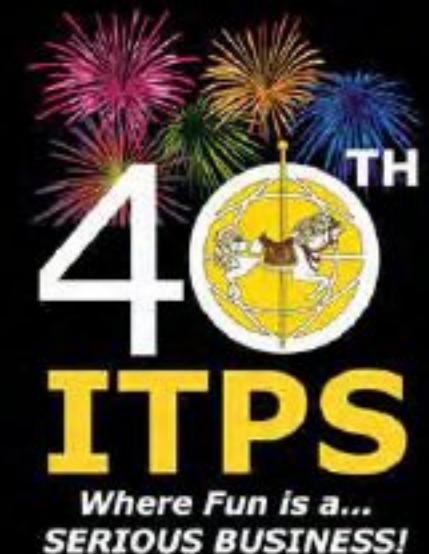
ITPS... "WHERE FUN IS A SERIOUS BUSINESS,"

is globally the leisure industry's leading independent, full-service consulting firm.

Founded by Dennis Speigel in 1983 and located in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, ITPS is uniquely qualified to assist in all aspects of leisure project development and has worked on over 500 projects and in over 55 countries since its inception. Always on the forefront of new trends, ITPS is experienced to assist in all aspects of any new project or existing facility. They can be reached at itps@interthemepark.com. ITPS is celebrating 40 years of service to the amusement industry in 2023.



*International
Theme Park
Services, Inc.*



**40 YEARS
From
Concept to
Completion
and
Beyond!**

www.interthemepark.com
itps@interthemepark.com
513-381-6131
2195 Victory Parkway
Cincinnati, Ohio 45206
USA



CALENDAR

September 26 – 28

IAAPA Expo Europe, Messe Vien, Vienna, AUSTRIA
 Contact: International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA
 Tel: +1 321 319 7600
 Fax: +1 321 319 7690
 Email: iaapa@IAAPA.org
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo-europe



October 13 – 15

15th China (Zhongshan) International Games & Amusement Fair
 Contact: Tina Zhang
 Email: sales@grandeurhk.com
www.zsgaf.com

October 25 – 26

WWA show 2023 New Orleans, Louisiana, USA
 Contact: Patty, WWA
 Tel: +1 913 5990300
 Email: patty@waterparks.org
www.waterparks.org

November 15 – 16

Family Attraction Expo, NEC, Birmingham, UK
 Contact: Fortem International, 33 Colston Ave, Bristol, BS1 4UA UK
 Tel: +44 (0) 2030264418
www.familyattractionexpo.co.uk

November 28 – 30

MAPIC, Palais des Festivals, Cannes, FRANCE
 Contact: Reed MIDEM, 27 Quai Alphonse Le Gallo, CS 10026 Boulogne, FRANCE
 Tel: +33 179 71 95 15
 Email: Daniela.jakovljevic@reedmidem.com
www.mapic.com

November 14 – 17

IAAPA Expo Orlando, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, USA
 Contact: International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions, 4155 West Taft Vineland Road, Orlando, Florida, USA
 Tel: +1 321 319 7600
 Fax: +1 321 319 7690
 Email: iaapa@IAAPA.org
www.iaapa.org/expos/iaapa-expo



January 11 – 13 2024

Atrax '24, 11th International Amusement – Attractions, Parks – Games and Sport Fields Industry Exhibition, Istanbul Expo Centre, Istanbul, TURKEY
 Contact: Tureks International Fairs co.
 Tel: +90 212 570 63 05
 Email: nergis@tureksfuar.com.tr
<https://atraxexpo.com/en/home/>



January 16 – 18 2024

EAG 24, Entertainment, Attractions & Gaming International Expo, ExCel London, UK
 Contact: EAG 29-30 Ely Place, London, EC1N 6TD, UK
 Tel: +44 (0) 204502 6795
 Email: sales@eagexpo.com
www.eagexpo.com



March 5 - 7 2024

DEAL 2024, Dubai World Trade Centre, Dubai, UAE
 Contact: International Expo-Consults (IEC)
 Tel: +971 4 3435777
 Email: deal@iecdubai.com
www.dealmiddleeastshow.com



March 18 – 20 2024

CAE Beijing 2024, Shougang Exhibition and Convention Center, Beijing, CHINA
 Contact: Katie Wang, L&A International Ltd, 6 Penmire Grove, Sale, Cheshire, M33 4FP, UK
 Tel: +44 (0)161 6100022
 Email: katie.w@chinaattractionsexpo.org
www.chinaattractionsexpo.org



May 7 – 9. 2024

Saudi Entertainment & Amusement Expo, Riyadh Front Exhibition & Convention & Centre, Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA
 Contact: DMG Events
 Tel: +971 448 0355
 Email: info@dmgevents.com
www.saudientertainmentexpo.com



Cover Image:
 Prater Vienna

Sep/Oct Issue 5, 2023
ISSN: 1359-6284

Editor: Beth Whitaker
 Email: editor@interpark.co.uk

News Editor: David Whitworth
 Email: news@interpark.co.uk

Features: Emma Davidson
 Email: features@interpark.co.uk

Contributing Columnist:
 Dennis Speigel

Publisher & Advertising Sales:
 John Fosbrooke
 Email: john@interpark.co.uk

Asian Sales & subscriptions:
 Lily Zhang
 Email: lily@interpark.co.uk

Annual Subscriptions (6 issues)
 Europe & Middle East £80
 North & South America & Africa £95
 Asia & Australia £105

InterPark (ISSN 1359-6284) is published six times a year for an annual subscription rate of £80 by InterPark International Limited.

Graphic Design:
 Redpin Publishing Ltd
www.redpin.co.uk

Advertising & subscription information
 Tel: +44 161 6100022
 Email: admin@interpark.co.uk
 Website: www.interpark.co.uk

ADVERTISERS

Alterface	25
Asia Attractions.....	13
Bertazzon.....	11
BoldMove Nation.....	33
CAE Beijing.....	15
Dotto Trains.....	19
Empex.....	21
ETF.....	23
Golden Crown	4
Gosetto.....	23
HUSS	33
IAAPA Expo USA.....	26
Intamin	27
Jinma Rides	IBC
Mack Rides.....	IFC + 5
RCI Adventure	OBC
Vekoma.....	17
ZTAG	29

Additional copies of InterPark distributed at these events.



As dates sometimes change, please check with organisers before visiting international trade events.

The views expressed within the pages of InterPark do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or publisher.

No responsibility will be accepted for any comments made by contributors, interviewees or advertisers.

Goods and services advertised are not necessarily endorsed by InterPark or InterPark International Ltd.

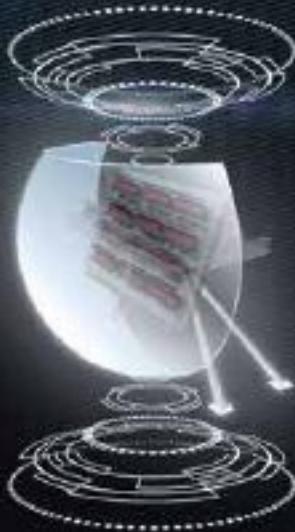
InterPark International Ltd. accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to any materials submitted for publication.

Copyright: No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers – InterPark International Limited, 137 Newshaw Lane, Hadfield, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 2AT



Stock Code: 300756
 Tel: (86)760-28132780
 Email: sales@jinmarides.com
 Website: www.jinmarides.com

FLYING THEATER



FX-96A Flipping type Flying Theater, adopts a multi-freedom dynamic seat structure, a giant screen 8K film, and television picture, and a variety of sensory effects, leading the visitors to experience the excitement as if soaring in the air, and creates an immersive amusement tour for the tourists to create a thrilling, vibrating, and exciting experience.



96



32m*30m



23m

 $\pm 500\text{mm}$  $\pm 10^\circ$  $\pm 10^\circ$ 

TAIAN • SHIGANDANG CULTURAL PARKS



WE BUILD ADVENTURE



GREEN
PRODUCT



PROVEN
EXPERIENCE



CONTINUAL
CLIENT SUPPORT



REPEAT
CUSTOMERS



RECOGNIZED
SAFETY RECORD



INDOOR & OUTDOOR
DESIGN OPTIONS

COME SEE US

IAAPA Expo Europe
Vienna, Austria
SEPT 26-28, 2023 | Booth #: B1432

IAAPA Expo Orlando
Orlando, Florida
NOV 14-17, 2023 | Booth #: 4815



(866) 747-9193 | rciadventure.com |

PHOTOGRAPHED:
FRITZ'S ADVENTURE
SKY TRAIL® + SKY TYKES®
BRANSON, MO

